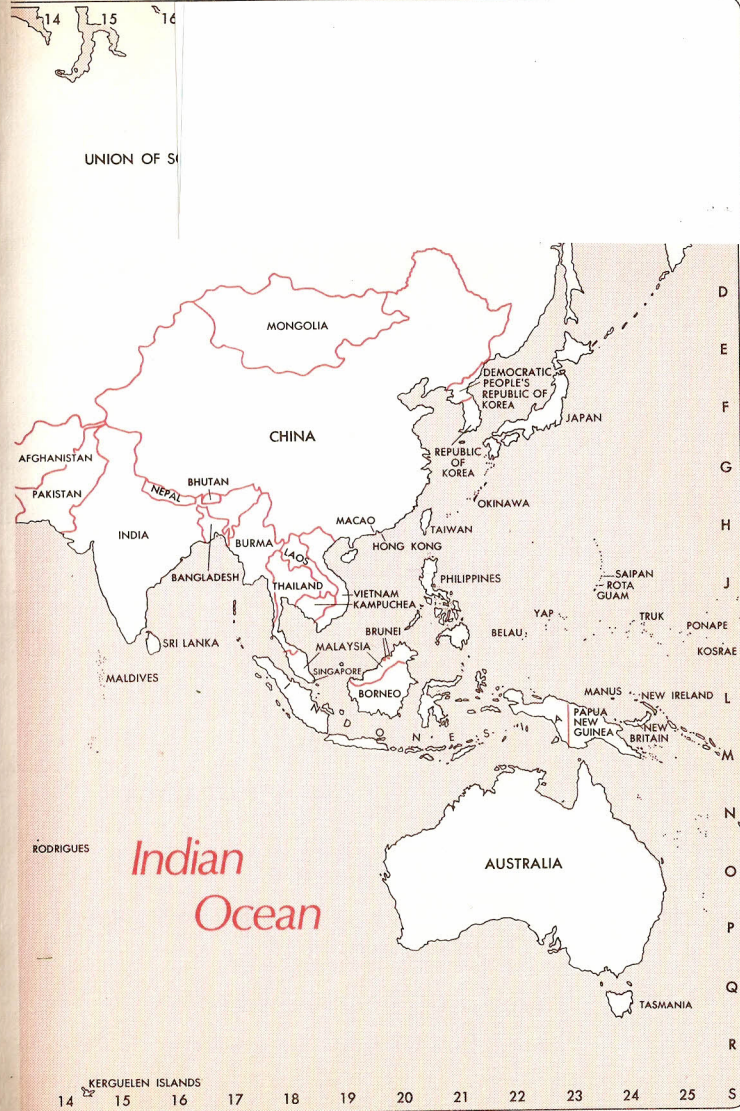
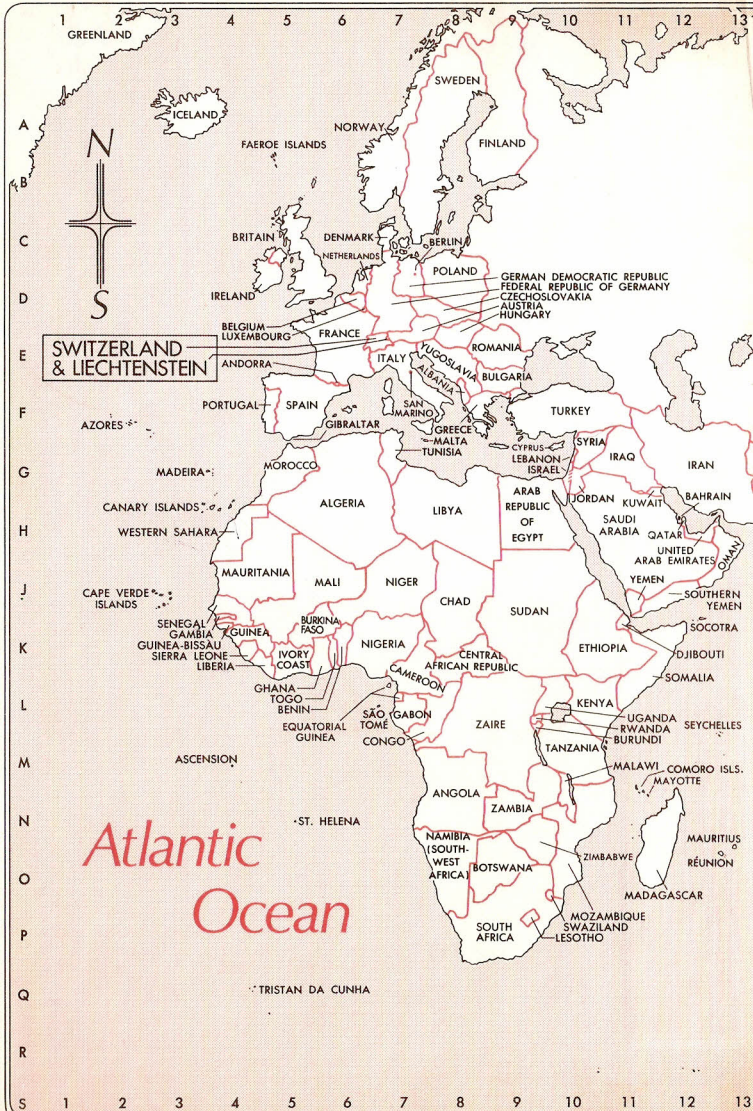


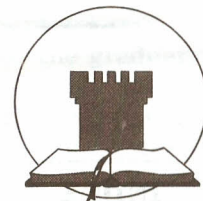
1987

1987
YEARBOOK
OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES



1987 YEARBOOK of Jehovah's Witnesses

Containing Report for the Service Year
of 1986



Corporate Publishers

**WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
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1987 YEARBOOK of Jehovah's Witnesses

THE first weekend of the 1986 service year of Jehovah's Witnesses was marked by events that were a foretaste of global blessings to follow. First, there was the dedication, on Saturday, September 7, 1985, of the Jersey City Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, known locally as the former Stanley Theater. Then, on September 8, this lovely 4,300-seat auditorium hosted the graduation of the 79th class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. Joy overflowed not only at hearing and seeing the excellent spiritual programs there presented but also at having such a beautiful structure to use in praising Jehovah God.

An unusual problem arose when the Jersey City property was purchased, in that the local city administration refused renovation permits. The Witnesses sued the city for denying them their constitutional rights. The case came before Judge Debevoise. Without delaying, the judge rendered a well-reasoned opinion indicating that the city's opposition 'unconstitutionally infringed on the plaintiffs' religious liberty interests.' He stated: "High in the pantheon of civil rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution is the right to be free of laws prohibiting the free exercise of religion or abridging freedom of speech." Armed with the necessary permits,

"As for me and my household, we shall serve Jehovah." These words of Joshua 24:15 express the resolve of families of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide as their Kingdom activity continues to expand.

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1987 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses
English (yb87-E)

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Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania
International Bible Students Association

hundreds of well-organized volunteer workers then swarmed into the building, completing the mammoth task of renovation in just nine months. In the meantime, Jersey City residents had voted the opposing administration out of office.

What did the local community think of this bright gem, the refurbished Stanley Theater, that now sparkled in their midst? The new mayor, Mr. Cucci, described it as "not a restoration or a renovation, but a new world." A congressman remarked, "I can tell that you are not interested in quantity of people but quality." The chairman of PATH Railways, which serves the area, said: "I have watched the workers and progress, and you people need to be congratulated. This is tremendous. I am so glad you restored the building. It is truly beautiful." An elderly couple who live nearby were amazed to see the work that went into reconditioning the hall. The wife exclaimed: "Now we can walk around this neighborhood at weekends without being afraid! There should be more people like you in the world. You should be proud of this fine place. No, *we* should be proud of this place."

Jehovah's Witnesses are indeed happy about having this Assembly Hall, truly a testimony to what can be accomplished by workers dedicated to Jehovah God. (Eccl. 3:10-13) But what other spiritual benefits does this place provide? For one, these expanded facilities make it possible for the headquarters Bethel family, together with guests, to meet under one roof for special programs. This large group of Bethel workers (now numbering 2,750 at Brooklyn and 930 at Watchtower Farms) is responsible for organizing and equipping the worldwide

body of Jehovah's Witnesses, and their activity sets the pattern for the grandest global campaign of witnessing about God's Kingdom in the world's history. Further, the graduates of Gilead School are sent forth from this place to reinforce the worldwide army of preachers. And local circuits, each comprising about 20 congregations, now have a spacious hall where they can unite for annual assemblies and other special events.

The Jersey City Assembly Hall is just one of dozens of such halls that are being built or remodeled throughout the earth. To help accommodate the 328 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in the New York area, the Albemarle Theater in Brooklyn was also procured. Hundreds of volunteer workers have toiled long hours in converting this into a fine 2,376-seat Assembly Hall; additionally, two 250-seat Kingdom Halls are being constructed in the basement. This facility, and some 30 other lovely Assembly Halls throughout the United States are helping to 'make the place of our tent more spacious.'—Isa. 54:2.

From Canada to Argentina, from Norway to Australia, God's people are selflessly supporting the construction of Assembly Halls. Australia recently built its fourth Assembly Hall in Adelaide, and volunteer workers completed this in 52 days—matching the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls in Nehemiah's day. (Neh. 6:15) Moreover, scores of Kingdom Halls are being erected. To cope with the urgent need for expansion, dozens of new halls have been built in North America and Europe in less than two days. Canada alone has erected 80 of these quickly built halls. A grand witness is given to the community, as

hundreds of well-organized volunteers go into action. A Kingdom Hall that was nonexistent early Saturday is often completed, fully equipped and landscaped, for its first meeting Sunday evening! —Ps. 149:1.

'EQUIPPED WITH EVERY GOOD THING'

It is also necessary to equip Jehovah's Witnesses with study material and instruments that they can use in preaching "this good news of the kingdom . . . in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations" before the end comes. (Heb. 13:21; Matt. 24:14) This global activity must be well organized. Procedures need to be simplified and work arranged in an orderly manner so that waste of time, effort, and expense is avoided. (1 Cor. 14:33, 40; Eph. 5:15, 16; Prov. 18:9) This is watched carefully with regard to streamlining office and service arrangements and in order to take better care of the continuing expansion of Jehovah's organization.

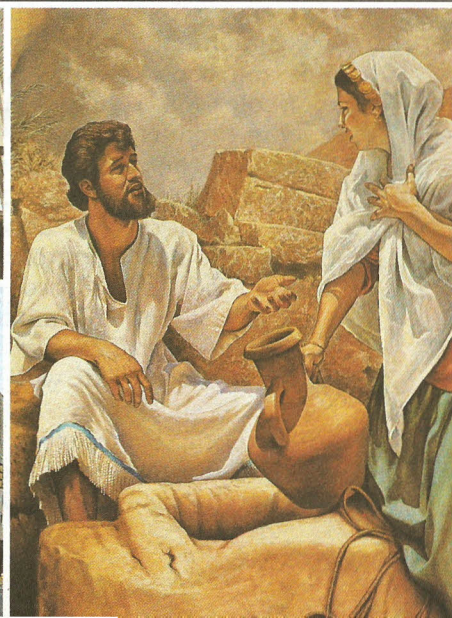
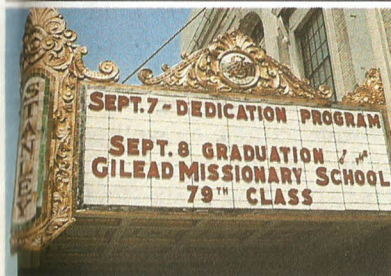
In the **United States**, building renovations in Brooklyn, New York, have included much work at 30 Columbia Heights and 360 Furman Street. To help out in this, and also in construction at Watchtower Farms, Wallkill, New York, brothers from throughout the United States have been invited to volunteer as temporary workers for a period of one or two weeks. These visiting brothers have experienced, too, the joys of Bethel life. There has been a grand "interchange of encouragement," and the visitors have returned to their home congregations to spread further the spirit of unity and love.—Rom. 1:11, 12; 1 Cor. 1:10.

During the year, three new high-speed MAN-Roland rotary offset presses were installed at Watch-



Jersey City Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses

**Showing: foyer, Gilead graduation audience, the
marquee, exterior view, and one of foyer murals**



tower Farms—each capable of printing a thousand magazines a minute. From January 1987, both the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines printed at that factory will appear in four colors in major languages. At Brooklyn, it has been necessary to order three high-speed Hantscho offset presses and new bindery lines to expand capacity for producing Bibles and books. Computerized electronic equipment has also been obtained to enhance the prepress work of processing the beautiful four-color artwork that is now featured in so many of the Society's publications. Certainly, "this good news of the kingdom" needs to be dressed and produced in as attractive a form as is economically reasonable.—Compare Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:15.

At the Selters, *Germany*, branch of the Watch Tower Society, it has been necessary to order a third high-speed Koenig and Bauer press and more bindery equipment to increase further production of Bibles and books for the European field. In *Italy* a four-color MAN-Roland press is also working overtime in producing books and magazines, as well as Bibles, for the rapidly expanding Italian field.

The *Japan* branch, which is building a six-story factory addition and an eight-story Bethel Home addition, is now using one of its original Tokyo Kikai color presses and two new high-speed Mitsubishi presses in producing millions of books, magazines, and Bibles. Japanese was the first language after English to come out with the *New World Translation* Reference Bible. Then 200,000 deluxe Bibles with marginal references were made for the use of the brothers and people studying the Bible, and now 200,000 regular-edition Bibles are being produced



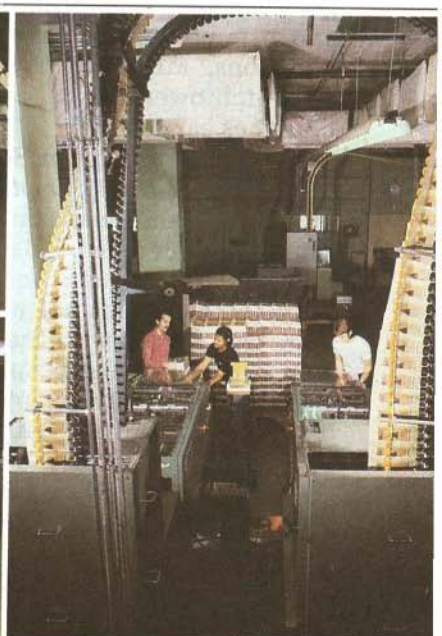
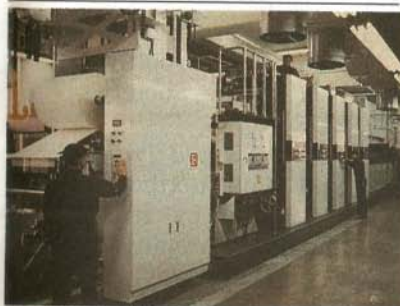
A thousand magazines a minute! Watch Tower four-color presses

Selters, Germany, roll stand

Ebina, Japan, general view

Rome, Italy, control panel

Wallkill, U.S.A., magazine delivery



for field distribution. The Society's *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* is appreciated both by the brothers and by the public in Japan as being the most accurate and easy-to-read Bible translation available in the Japanese language.

Other Watch Tower Society branches that will be printing magazines in four colors from 1987 include **Australia, Brazil, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Republic of Korea, and South Africa**, and it is hoped soon to add **Mexico** to the list. Our magazines that do not yet have four colors are also very attractive. Altogether, *The Watchtower* is printed simultaneously, with the same contents, in 33 languages around the world.

MEPS (Multilanguage Electronic Phototype-setting System), developed by the Society, has been invaluable in supporting simultaneous publication, and it is proving to have many other practical applications. MEPS is now operating in Brooklyn, at Watchtower Farms, and in 27 of the Society's branches earth wide.

Are the Watch Tower Society's *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* and Bible textbooks, brochures, and magazines appreciated by truth-hungry people? Yes, indeed! There are so many today who are "conscious of their spiritual need." It is only the rich spiritual nourishment to be derived from God's Word with the help of these publications that can satisfy the people's appetite for truth and make them really happy. (Matt. 5:3; John 8:32) Thus, in the United States alone, more than a million copies of the timely book *True Peace and Security—How Can You Find It?* were distributed in April. Subscriptions for the *Watchtower* and *Awake!*

magazines processed by the Society at its Wallkill, New York, factory during 1986 totaled 1,798,466, a 13.3-percent increase over the previous year. The subscriptions obtained worldwide in the field during the same period, in close to 100 different languages, totaled 1,982,148.

The table below lists production in the Society's factories during 1986. Altogether, 41 branches produced magazines, including many to refresh our brothers in countries where God's work is banned. —Prov. 25:25.

CARING FOR EXPANSION

The expansion of the global witness work of Jehovah's Witnesses has called for much expense in purchasing, constructing, and renovating properties; in equipping factories and offices at headquarters and in the Society's 93 branches; and in providing for the material needs of the 8,920 volunteers who serve in the Bethel families. In addition, during 1986, a total of \$23,545,801.70 was spent in financial support of the many other volunteer workers in the field, such as the 2,762 missionaries, 13,351 special pioneers,

1986 Production in Principal Branches

Country	Bibles and Books	Magazines
U.S.A.	27,269,926	201,982,628
Germany	6,790,127	26,519,615
Italy	2,722,200	32,397,550
Japan	2,841,739	43,198,566
Others	4,334,311	246,118,096
TOTALS	43,958,303	550,216,455
INCREASE	23.6%	3.7%

and overseers and their wives for the world's 3,353 circuits and districts. Much of this expense is covered by the goodwill contributions of congregations, individual witnesses of Jehovah, and other interested persons around the earth. Even young children have appreciated this privilege, as indicated by the expressions on the opposite page. Truly, 'God loves such cheerful givers.'—2 Cor. 9:7.

When disasters affect Jehovah's people in different parts of the earth, local branches of the Society immediately arrange to care for necessary assistance, and the Governing Body at Brooklyn directs use of a relief fund according to the seriousness of the situation. During the year destructive cyclones struck *Fiji* and the *Solomon Islands* in the Pacific area. In the Solomon Islands, there was heavy loss of life, but at the time, our brothers from that area were attending a circuit assembly in another location. Thus, they escaped with their lives. The Australia and Papua New Guinea branches airlifted more than 35 tons of rice and canned meat to the stricken brothers. Cooperation of the local brothers in caring for one another and rebuilding shattered homes is a marvelous demonstration of the true Christianity based on John 13:34, 35.

INTEGRITY KEEPERS TO THE FORE!

As summer moved down to the Southern Hemisphere, further "Integrity Keepers" Conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses were held. How stimulating were those gatherings, and especially as many of Jehovah's Witnesses traveled from other lands to encourage their brothers and receive much encouragement in return! What a grand brotherhood this is, for it enables Jehovah's people to feel at home and

Dear Watchtower Bible and Tract Society,

I am 12 years old. I would like to give this check for \$7.50 to put where it is needed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your real life experiences in the Watchtower and Awake. I enjoy reading them very much.

Sisterly love, A. O.

Dear Society,

I Like the Live Forever BOOK. I am seven years old, and I Placed five Live Forever BOOKS in two weeks. THANK you for the pretty pictures in it. I Have FUN in service. I am sending you part of my ALLOWANCE [\$1.00].

Your friend, E. S.

Dear Brothers,

I got this money [\$50.00] when I sold my horse. I want it to go to the building work at Bethel. I'm looking forward to going there with my family.

Thankyou for all the good work you do for Jehovah.

Sincerely, R. G.

Dear Watch tower bible & tract Society,

This is my \$1.40. I got it by making oatmeal raisin cookies. And selling them. I'm nine and a half. I have short shiny blond hair, hazel eyes and I weigh 55 pounds. I'm in fourth grade. And i read alot.

M. S.

Dear Brothers,

I am writing you this note to give you the money. [\$1.00] You have made good publications. I am looking to get baptized soon. I really enjoy the truth. I look forward to playing with all the animals.

N.

P.S. Write back. I have a stamp for you.

enjoy happy association wherever they may travel on this earth! The apostle Peter said of Jehovah: "In every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:35) That makes such men acceptable to one another too. All have been brought into precious union with God, with Christ, and with one another—just as Jesus prayed it should be.—John 17:20, 21.

In the Americas there were outstanding gatherings in *Haiti* where 16,260 attended, in *Colombia* and *Peru* with attendances of 56,537 and 62,607 respectively, and finally in Buenos Aires, *Argentina*, where over 57,000 conventioners exulted in their freedom to meet openly after 33 years under ban.

The conventions in *Taiwan*, the *Philippines*, and *Thailand* hosted hundreds of foreign delegates from more than 20 countries. In Taiwan it was a joy to see the tribal people, the Chinese, and the visitors mingling as one happy family. The public talk in Mandarin was given by a native from the Amis tribe who has applied himself over the years to learning several languages and who serves on the Branch Committee for that land. The conventions in Manila no doubt made a contribution toward the tremendous growth in the Philippines, from an average of 78,867 publishers in the field last year to a peak of 95,746 in April 1986. Similarly, the publishers in Thailand were greatly stimulated, their number increasing to 914 in March, while in April 157 auxiliary pioneers reported, 80 percent more than the previous peak.

A sister who attended the special convention in Christchurch, *New Zealand*, wrote: "I just have to

express my deep appreciation. The program and the association with all our brothers from near and far are indeed a demonstration of unity in the worship of Jehovah our God." In January 1986, delegates had come to New Zealand from 12 nations as diverse in location and culture as Fiji, Japan, United States, Alaska, Hawaii, Niue, Solomon Islands, Hong Kong, Canada, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, and Australia. The 9,546 publishers in the country were happy to see 14,848 in attendance.

AFRICAN CONVENTIONS WERE TIMELY

From *Zaire* comes the report: "The international 'Integrity Keepers' Convention was a milestone. How thrilling it was to have over 32,000 packed into the football stadium on the last day, Sunday, December 22! The conventioners came from over 20 nations, and a total of 604 were baptized." All kinds of obstacles loomed up, yet Jehovah always moved them out of the way. Some religious opposers had said that Jehovah's Witnesses must never be permitted to use that open-air stadium. But its use was granted! Before and after the assembly, there were heavy rains and floods, yet during the four days of the convention, there was no rain. A crisis suddenly arose when a football team was scheduled to arrive from the Republic of Korea to play a match in the stadium on Friday evening. The brothers prepared to shorten the program on Friday and dismantle the platform. However, the entire Korean team took ill with a stomach virus, so the convention could go on! The manager of the stadium remarked: "Your God is powerful, and you must have been praying very hard!"

Everything in Zaire seemed geared up for a bigger

expansion when suddenly, on March 12, 1986, the president signed an ordinance banning our work! Missionaries were compelled to leave the country. However, the "Integrity Keepers" Convention had marvelously strengthened the 35,000 brothers in that land to continue serving Jehovah courageously.—Job 27:5; Prov. 27:11.

The convention held at the Jamhuri Park in Nairobi, **Kenya**, was attended by 8,139, including delegates from 32 countries; 121 were baptized. One special pioneer brother came by bicycle from his assignment in turbulent southern Uganda. He was on the road for about one week, traveling some 500 miles (800 km). The bicycle was worn out by the time he reached Kenya, but he was in good spirits and certainly not sorry for having made the long, hazardous journey. Other brothers who came from various East African countries had to save their funds in some cases for an entire year in order to make the journey to Nairobi and then return home. Large tour groups came from Austria, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Scandinavian lands, and the United States.

Fine publicity was given to the convention. During a 15-minute interview with three brothers on a government television station, questions were answered as to what Jehovah's Witnesses were doing for the people of Kenya. The spiritual and moral benefits of the Kingdom message were outlined, as well as the Society's reading-and-writing program for assisting some of the local native people. The *Reasoning* book that had been released at the convention on Thursday afternoon was also shown to the television audience and a sample of its contents was presented.

Then, a Nigerian brother, dressed in his native costume, was among those interviewed and he conveyed a report on the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses in that country.

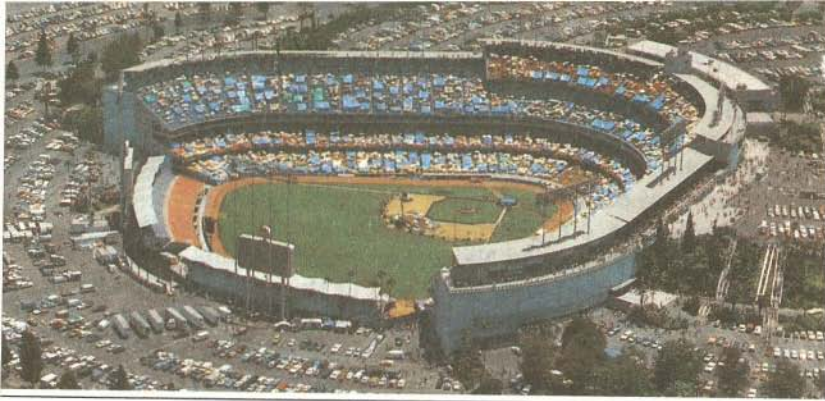
A leading Nairobi newspaper, the *Daily Nation*, said: "They came to Nairobi on planes, trains, buses, bicycles, and on foot. They met at the arena, Jamhuri Park. Who are they and what are they coming to see?"

"The badges hanging on their chests read: 'Integrity Keepers.'

"They have not come to an agricultural show. They do not expect to see horses and a floodlight tattoo. They have come to listen to the word of Jehovah at the convention of Jehovah's Witnesses. . . . One fascinating aspect of the convention is the warmth observed between the participants. Yet they come from many different nationalities."

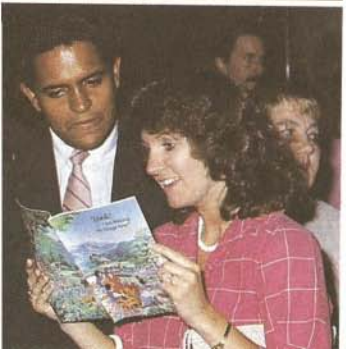
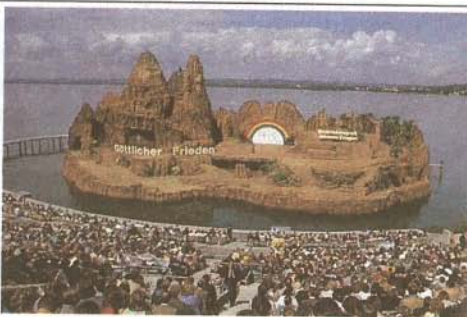
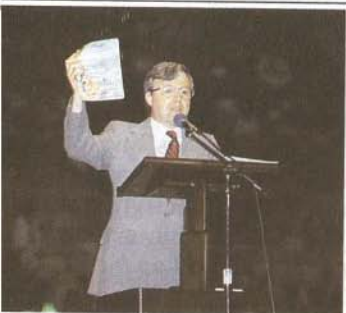
There was a tremendous response for field service at the convention and it was estimated that 80 percent of those attending participated. The visiting delegates particularly commented on the fine reception they received in their house-to-house activity and the amount of interest that was found. Unquestionably, a tremendous witness was given, and as far as the Witnesses in Kenya and the visiting delegates were concerned, the impression was a deep and lasting one spiritually.

From **South Africa** comes this further report: "In sharp contrast to the escalation of racial violence during the past year, the unity, peace, and genuine love among Jehovah's people reached new heights. This was demonstrated at two unforgettable district conventions, attended by 77,920 of all races and



“Divine Peace” District Conventions

Typical stadium crowd, thrilling new releases,
Austrian “island” stage, many baptisms



Worldwide Report

19

languages at Durban and Johannesburg.” Outstanding was the mingling together of the various language groups between sessions—the Sepedi, Sesotho, Tswana, Xhosa, and Zulu, as well as Afrikaans and English. Visitors even came from as far away as Japan.

The “Integrity Keepers” Convention was an occasion for all of Jehovah’s Witnesses and many newly interested persons to remember. Available reports from 851 locations around the earth show a total attendance of 5,688,335, with 75,606 being baptized.

DIVINE PEACE AMONG GOD’S PEOPLE

Appropriately, “Divine Peace” was the theme of the district conventions that started in the Northern Hemisphere in the summer of 1986 and are even now continuing in other lands. The year 1986 had been dubbed by the UN as the International Year of Peace. But did it answer the need for peace? Although the world’s religions gave full support to the Year, prospects for true peace continue to crumble. This is because the nations of earth look for peace to come in *their* way. As God’s prophet foretold, they are “saying: ‘There is peace! There is peace!’ when there is no peace.” (Jer. 8:11) Real peace on earth will come only when God’s Kingdom in the hands of his Son, Jesus Christ, ‘crushes and puts an end’ to the governmental systems under Satan’s control. —Dan. 2:44.

In the meantime, Jehovah’s people “seek peace and pursue it” in God’s way. (1 Pet. 3:11) The “Divine Peace” District Convention, with its four successive days stressing the themes of “God Will Bless His People With Peace,” “Having Our Feet Shod

With Good News of Peace," "Observing the Oneness of the Spirit in the Uniting Bond of Peace," and "The God of Peace Will Bruise Satan Under Your Feet Shortly," has proved to be a grand blessing for the peace-loving Witnesses. Reports on these conventions are appearing in the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. **Zambia**, Africa, with a population of 6,776,232, had an amazing attendance of 629,953, at least one out of every 11 of the population. These conventions have strengthened us for the work at hand and cemented our confidence that the arch-peacebreaker, Satan, and all his works will soon be removed from this earth.

FIGHTING LEGAL BATTLES

In **India**, a test of integrity came in November 1985 when Witness children in a school in the state of Kerala became a center of controversy because of refusing to sing the national anthem, though they were willing to stand respectfully. As efforts to explain our position to the school and educational authorities were unsuccessful, the matter was taken to court by the children's father. However, the district court rejected this appeal, and when the case was referred to the state High Court, there, too, the ruling went against the Witness children. By this time a number of children in other schools in this state (as well as a few in a neighboring state) were made to stop attending school.

The father of the Witness children appealed the case to the Supreme Court of India in New Delhi. The appeal was admitted in February 1986, and the case was heard before two Supreme Court justices from July 29 to 31, 1986. A fine witness regarding the pure worship of Jehovah and the strictly neutral

stand of God's people was given to this highest judicial authority of the land. In deciding in favor of the children, the Court stated: "Our tradition teaches tolerance, our philosophy teaches tolerance, our Constitution practices tolerance, let us not dilute it."

Newspapers in **Turkey** gave wide publicity to the district convention held September 21-23, 1985. In this way a splendid witness was given to the entire country. People whom we could never reach read about Jehovah's Witnesses and our message—that God's heavenly Kingdom is the only solution for all the problems of mankind. The brothers could enjoy three days of a happy spiritual feast, which was especially appreciated by the 23 brothers in Ankara who had been arrested at the previous year's convention but were now released after one year in prison.

However, the question remained, how would the Council of the Supreme Court of Appeal rule on freedom of assembly? On May 26, 1986, the Council announced its verdict, and it was in our favor! By a majority decision, the court acquitted Jehovah's Witnesses from all charges—and this on the same day that Brother Henschel was making a brief visit. Because of the favorable decision, it was arranged for him to give two talks in our hall of worship in Istanbul. This was very much appreciated, especially since it was only the second time after many years that a member of the Governing Body was able to speak freely to a great crowd of brothers in our own hall.

PROCLAIMING PEACE

At the time of Jesus' human birth, the heavenly army of angels praised Jehovah, saying: "Glory in

the heights above to God, and upon earth peace among men of goodwill." (Luke 2:14) Those who have goodwill from God certainly do live at peace with him and with one another. They thus enjoy a blessed union with God and Christ, and they are united in carrying out Jesus' command: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit." How have these modern-day witnesses of Jehovah fared in this precious assignment during 1986? Wonderfully, for Jesus continues to fulfill toward them his promise: "And, look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things."—Matt. 28:19, 20.

The "1986 Service Year Report of Jehovah's Witnesses Worldwide" as it appears on pages 34-41 of this *Yearbook*, should bring rejoicing to all the 3,229,022 Kingdom publishers who, as a peak, had a share, however small, in this marvelous record. Running through the figures at the bottom of the chart on pages 40 and 41, please note that the average of 3,063,289 publishers is 6.9 percent more than last year's average. What a fine total of new brothers and sisters baptized—225,868, an increase of 19 percent! And just look at the average of special, regular, and auxiliary pioneers in the field each month—391,294, up by 21.2 percent! The number of congregations has increased 5 percent, hours spent in field service 15.3 percent, and Bible studies conducted each month with newly interested persons 14.6 percent. Then there is the new peak of Memorial attendance—8,160,597, which is 4.7 percent more than in 1985.

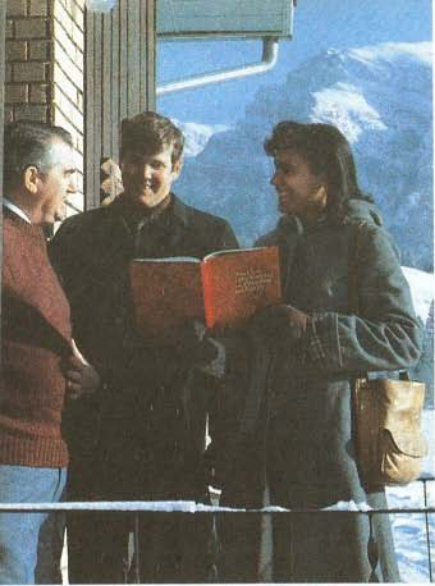
However, it is not merely the figures that make us

happy. We exult at what they represent. They show that Jehovah is blessing his people as they share in fulfilling prophecies such as that of Isaiah 12:3-5: "With exultation you people will be certain to draw water out of the springs of salvation. And in that day you will certainly say: 'Give thanks to Jehovah, you people! Call upon his name. Make known among the peoples his dealings. Make mention that his name is put on high. Make melody to Jehovah, for he has done surpassingly. This is made known in all the earth.'" The chart shows that Jehovah's name has indeed been made known in 208 distinct countries and territories of the earth. The figures are impressive. And note that "33 Other Countries" are represented, places where Jehovah's Witnesses work under restrictions or ban and which are not named in the report, for the protection of our brothers. How busy these loyal Witnesses were in recording a 4.6-percent increase in publishers, and a 23.3-percent increase in the average of pioneers in the field each month!

What kind of success and what experiences are Jehovah's Witnesses enjoying around the earth? Though we do not have room to report on every country, here is a sampling of what has been happening during 1986:

'STREAMING TO JEHOVAH'S HOUSE' IN NORTH AMERICA

A volunteer who came all the way from *Alaska* to Brooklyn Bethel to share for one week in temporary construction work had this to report: The Wasilla, Alaska, Congregation witnesses to a territory that is 200 miles (320 km) long surrounding North America's tallest mountain, Mount McKinley, which is



Banff, Canada

20,300 feet (6,200 m) high. But many here are streaming to another elevation—"the mountain of the house of Jehovah." (Isa. 2: 2, 3) In just two years the congregation has increased from 47 to 127 publishers, and in the past year the number of regular pioneers has grown from one to 11. Whether by plane, automobile, or on foot,

the witness in Alaska continues to expand, so that there is now one Witness to every 262 persons in that otherwise frigid land.

In **Canada**, the service year ended with a fine new peak of 88,130 publishers. Pioneer service continues to expand. Two of the Canadian pioneers are over a hundred years of age. They have been in full-time service without interruption since 1914! One of them, Janet McDonald, lives in New Brunswick. The other, Grace Lounsbury, who is affectionately called Amazing Grace, lives in Montreal. Four auxiliary pioneer brothers, younger in years, showed initiative by starting their service about 11 o'clock at night and working together through till the wee hours of the morning. They visited all-night restaurants and stores, and desk clerks who had little to do. They talked to many people who had never had

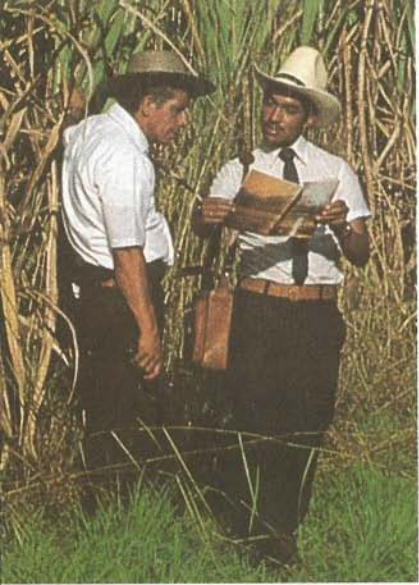
Worldwide Report

25

an opportunity to meet Jehovah's Witnesses before and placed many books, as well as magazines.

Zealous Kingdom publishers in large cities are using the telephone to reach people in tight-security apartment buildings. On one call, even a wrong number got results. The man who answered was an immigrant who, along with his wife and a friend, had arrived in Canada only three months earlier from China. Though he explained to the Witness that he was an atheist, he was kind enough to listen to the Bible texts she read and to her explanations. An arrangement was made to meet him and his wife for further discussion. The Witness decided it would be best to use the book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* to show that existing things must have had a Maker. What a surprise the clear evidence was to the couple! They were convinced to think beyond the claims of atheism. They beamed at the way the *Creation* book made so much sense in its arguments. This motivated them to look into the Bible. Now a regular Bible study is being held with them.

In the **United States**, a sister in Texas was following up a subscription renewal that had been given to her and found that not only did the woman want to resubscribe but she also brought out advertisements she had cut out of the magazines during the year. She wanted nine books. The sister was glad to provide these and asked her if she would like a Bible study to follow up on the Bible course she had been taking through the magazines. The woman responded favorably and is now attending meetings; four other members of her family are also studying. What a joy it is to see a peak of 744,919 publishers in the continental United States—almost one quarter of all Kingdom proclaimers on earth!



**Quezaltenango,
Guatemala**

"It is an association that grows by leaps and bounds." This appraisal of Jehovah's Witnesses in **Mexico** was expressed in the weekly newspaper *Veredicto*. How fittingly it describes the activity in that land during 1986! Publishers leaped forward to a peak of 198,003 in the month of August. Home Bible studies bounded up to

an average of 300,473. This means that 11 percent of the studies in the world were being conducted in Mexico. In 12 months 634 congregations were enrolled, an average of almost two each day!

Despite the fact that a new addition of over a hundred rooms was dedicated in April 1985, already another addition to the Mexico Bethel is being planned to house the continually increasing branch family as it cares for the rapidly expanding organization.

PHENOMENAL GROWTH IN CENTRAL AMERICA

In **Guatemala** there was splendid support for a special three-month campaign in isolated territory. It was called "Step over into Macedonia and help us." (Acts 16:9) The branch office provided printed

presentations in the four main Indian languages: Cakchiquel, Mam, Quekchí, and Quiché, and more than 120 towns and villages were reached with the good news of Jehovah's Kingdom. How did people respond? One group of brothers wrote: "They accepted the good news with great enthusiasm, and it was marvelous to see their eyes shining while they attentively listened to the encouraging Kingdom message." The branch received this appeal from an Evangelical pastor: "I have based the major part of my teaching on the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. I have come to know that only Jehovah's Witnesses study the Scriptures thoroughly, and I know that I have to associate with the Witnesses. You could help us in this area by sending two pioneers."

From war-torn **El Salvador** comes the report: "The Memorial attendance for this year was 51,151; this shows that there is a good prospect for future growth in this country. During the service year we had seven new peaks in publishers; our publisher peak up until now is 15,119 for the month of August 1986."

In **Honduras** there was a Memorial attendance of 20,080, many times the new publisher peak of 4,436. Pioneer service continues to expand. During the months of May and June, 59 brothers and sisters went through the three classes of the Pioneer Service School. One sister wrote: "The two weeks that I spent there were the happiest of all my life because I learned how to serve Jehovah, my brothers, and my neighbor better. Now, by putting into practice what I have learned, I notice that I have more

success in my Bible studies and in the preaching work, also in dealing with my brothers and the members of my family. Furthermore, my desire to cooperate with the organization and my love for it have increased."

Panama reports that many publishers are beginning to see the importance of the pioneer work. More than a hundred new regular pioneers have enrolled during the year, almost half the number that were previously serving! In the month of March, a total of 657 served as auxiliary pioneers, which is an increase of 55 percent over the previous peak. One out of every seven publishers in the country had a share. In May a total of 7,822 Bible studies was reported—almost two for each publisher.

PACE QUICKENS IN THE CARIBBEAN

Jehovah foretold that he would "speed it up in its own time." (Isa. 60:22) Thus, **Jamaica** reports that the pace of increase has certainly quickened over the past three years. For example, it took nine years to increase from 6,000 to 7,000 publishers but just four more years to reach the 8,000 mark. The book *Reasoning From the Scriptures* is helping the publishers to give an effective witness and to answer questions on return visits. The following experience from a sister highlights its usefulness in overcoming objections. She writes: "Yesterday I was making a return visit on a lady who had shown some interest, but whose husband is somewhat opposed. After a Scriptural discussion, she said to me, 'Show Harry [her husband] why Jehovah's Witnesses do not celebrate Christmas or birthdays.' I then opened the *Reasoning* book and simply read straight from it

what is said under the heading 'Christmas.' As I read, I looked up to find him nodding his head in agreement and saying, 'I can see that, I can see that.' His wife was elated. I did the same thing under the heading 'Birthdays' and got the same response. His wife was so delighted at his acceptance that instead of saying 'I,' she said 'we' will be coming to your meetings. The husband did not disagree."

In **Haiti** an assistant pastor in a Protestant church later became a special pioneer with Jehovah's organization. He himself tells us: "One day I was visited by two sisters who came to tell me that God's Kingdom was the only hope for mankind. At that time I was a pastor and sincerely believed my religion was the only true one. Sometime later, I had a discussion with another one of Jehovah's Witnesses on the Trinity. The ring of the truth and the high moral standards of Jehovah's Witnesses cultivated in me a desire to hear more from the Bible, so I started studying with the Witnesses and attending meetings at the Kingdom Hall. I tried to preach in my home church the new truths I was learning but found this stirred up opposition against me. I soon saw that my church was no longer the place for me, so I quit attending in spite of inducements offered by the other pastors. I was baptized and started as an auxiliary pioneer. Later, I was invited to take up special pioneer service and am now a ministerial servant and am preaching the good news in the same town where I was pastor. It is a real joy for me to conduct many Bible studies with those who once called me pastor."

In the **Dominican Republic**, two new and two

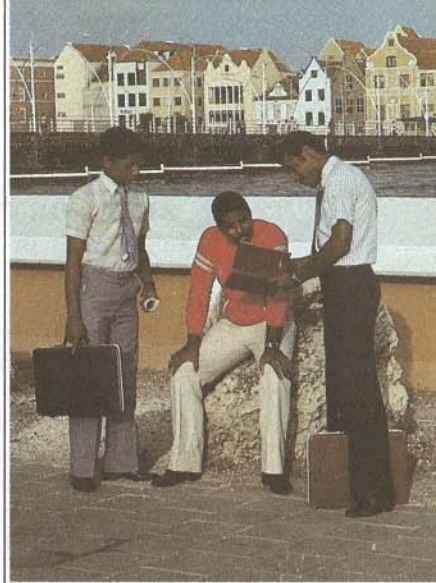
older missionaries were assigned to a new missionary home in Dajabón, a small town near the Haitian border. The 12 publishers there were happy to receive help. Many new studies were started immediately, and it became evident that a Kingdom Hall was needed. Brothers from the United States, Canada, and from as far away as Germany came to help the local brothers. Within three weeks they were able to hold their first meeting in the newly built Kingdom Hall. The unity that was shown in this multinational effort gave a great witness to the local people, many of whom started to attend meetings and to study. At their first Memorial celebration as an established congregation, they were overjoyed to welcome 114 attenders! One veteran missionary of 40 years was asked, "When will the increases stop?" His reply warmed the heart: "When the *whole earth* is filled with Jehovah's servants!"

The **Leeward Islands** branch writes that, to accommodate the increased attendance at meetings and assemblies, larger meeting facilities are a critical need. The brothers show much initiative in raising the necessary funds. A pioneer on the island of **Nevis** writes: "After leaving the circuit assembly where the brothers had spoken about raising funds to build an Assembly Hall, we decided to do some baking. In six months, with baking only on Friday, we were able to raise over \$3,000 toward building and equipping our Kingdom Hall." One of the local bakers observed the fine quality of the brothers' bread and repeatedly sought to hire the pioneers to manage his bakery. They told him: "We are not in Nevis for secular work. We are devoted to serving Jehovah full-time."

Willemstad, Curaçao

Knowing the influential power of a good example, Paul said: "Become imitators of me, even as I am of Christ." (1 Cor. 11:1) It is far better to say, "Do as I am doing" than to say, "Do as I say." One elder, a service overseer in **Barbados**, was given a Service Meeting assignment on obtaining subscriptions. He realized, however, that in order for him to be effective and persuasive in the presentation of his part, he should have obtained at least one subscription. But he had not yet got any. So, while lying in bed at night, he thought about friends to whom he might offer the subscription. He came up with the names of six persons. The next day he contacted these six persons, and four of the six accepted the subscription offer. Needless to say, he was able to speak with great conviction and enthusiasm at the Service Meeting, telling the brothers, "Do as I have done."

A quickly built Kingdom Hall was constructed over the December holiday period in Scarborough, **Tobago**. Some 800 brothers volunteered to travel from Trinidad to do the bulk of the work. It was a great witness to the entire island of Tobago, as it is



the only Kingdom Hall in the island. It was put up in just three days!

SOUTH AMERICA SHOWS 'ZEAL FOR FINE WORKS'

Much is happening in South America, and it is hoped these few reports will convey something of the zealous spirit that is abroad in the field there. (Titus 2:14) For example, **Venezuela** attained its 42nd consecutive peak in regular pioneers—2,553—and a peak of 35,248 publishers, a 28-percent increase over last year's average. With an average of 52,451 home Bible studies being conducted and a Memorial attendance of 128,627, the prospects for further expansion seem limitless.

In a small village in **Suriname**, near the French Guiana border, the congregation built a large Kingdom Hall. It serves also as a dormitory for the brothers from the rivers in the deep south, as they travel by boat along the river to attend assemblies. While staying at this halfway house, they go out preaching, hunt and fish together for food, and rehearse the program for the circuit assembly. After the assembly, they return again to their homes by way of this Kingdom Hall. Many local people have become impressed by the love and care the brothers show for one another, so they, too, want to become part of our worldwide brotherhood and so start studying the Bible.

In **Bolivia** a brother lunching in a crowded restaurant was reading *The Watchtower*. A stranger came to share his small table. Noticing the brother's magazine, the man commented that he, too, had been a reader of *The Watchtower*. "I would really like to know the Bible like Jehovah's Witnesses do,"

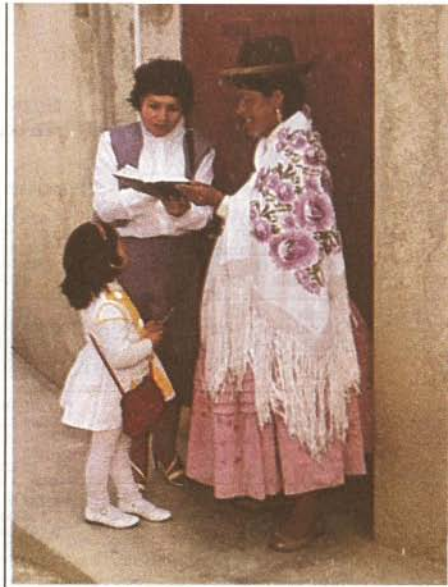
**La Paz,
Bolivia**

he said. "You can," replied the brother. "We offer free home Bible studies to those who are interested." The result? The man is now our baptized brother and has also joined the growing ranks of the regular pioneers. Many deserving ones are being sought out and gathered in Bolivia. (Matt. 10:7, 13) Baptisms

this year totaled 642, and Memorial attendance was 21,674—an increase of 4,505 over 1985. What a potential for further grand increase!

The branch in **Brazil** writes enthusiastically: "Over half a million! Or, rather, 533,400 was Brazil's Memorial attendance figure for 1986." Thrilled beyond words, Jehovah's people in that land had peak after peak of publishers, culminating with 196,948 in August. Bible studies surpassed the number of publishers, with an all-time high of 211,541 in June. During the year, well over a hundred Kingdom Halls were built and dedicated, including one in the town of Manacapuru in the heart of the Amazon jungle, and people are flocking to these halls in ever-increasing numbers. Assembly Halls are being constructed in five major cities.

Religious pastures, hitherto undisturbed, are



1986 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF

Letter and number following each country's name indicates the country's

Country or Territory	Population	1986 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1986 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1985
Alaska (A-31)	529,200	2,018	262	1,868	5
Algeria (H-6)	22,000,000	43	511,628	37	9
American Samoa (N-29)	35,800	88	405	77	-4*
Andorra (E-6)	44,596	108	413	98	14
Anguilla (J-42)	6,524	18	362	16	
Antigua (J-43)	70,794	225	315	212	7
Argentina (P-42)	30,000,000	61,373	489	59,348	11
Aruba (J-42)	66,200	369	179	345	15
Australia (O-22)	15,851,800	44,362	357	42,998	4
Austria (E-7)	7,557,676	16,515	458	16,185	3
Azores (F-2)	261,300	353	740	331	14
Bahamas (H-41)	209,505	848	247	791	15
Bangladesh (H-17)	100,000,000	22	4,545,455	19	12
Barbados (J-43)	265,000	1,553	171	1,501	6
Belau (K-22)	13,000	61	213	46	10
Belgium (D-6)	9,788,895	22,202	441	21,343	2
Belize (J-39)	145,000	730	199	595	1
Benin (K-6)	3,792,000	1,758	2,157	1,491	8
Bermuda (G-42)	57,000	349	163	330	7
Bolivia (N-42)	6,500,000	4,928	1,319	4,467	11
Bonaire (J-42)	10,340	57	181	49	11
Botswana (O-9)	1,224,056	464	2,638	430	10
Brazil (M-43)	138,403,000	196,948	703	185,126	11
Britain (C-5)	55,060,000	107,767	511	101,863	5
Brunei (K-20)	225,000	6	37,500	5	-17*
Burkina Faso (K-5)	7,318,695	324	22,589	288	17
Burma (H-18)	35,000,000	1,447	24,188	1,342	5
Burundi (L-9)	4,800,000	572	8,527	857	54
Canada (B-37)	25,123,600	88,130	285	84,343	5
Cape Verde Islands (J-3)	310,000	231	1,342	212	10
Cayman Islands (H-40)	16,821	67	251	54	-2*
Central Afr. Rep. (K-8)	2,740,000	1,280	2,141	1,170	-6*
Chad (J-8)	4,000,000	188	21,277	172	29
Chile (O-41)	12,271,173	29,340	418	27,585	12
Colombia (K-41)	27,867,326	29,235	953	27,587	12
Congo (L-8)	1,700,000	1,219	1,395	1,084	5
Cook Islands (N-31)	17,000	89	191	79	18
Costa Rica (K-40)	2,579,503	10,012	258	9,433	10
Curaçao (J-42)	171,088	1,293	132	1,265	12
Cyprus (G-10)	600,000	1,112	540	1,096	3
Denmark (C-7)	5,116,273	15,186	337	14,796	2
Djibouti (K-11)	400,000	8	50,000	5	-44*
Dominica (J-43)	81,000	233	348	222	8
Dominican Rep. (J-41)	5,647,977	9,687	583	9,307	8
Ecuador (L-40)	9,100,000	10,527	864	10,013	13
El Salvador (J-39)	5,244,000	15,119	347	14,546	7
Equatorial Guinea (L-7)	312,120	158	1,975	143	16
Falkland Islands (S-43)	1,900	4	475	4	4
Faeroe Islands (B-5)	45,754	91	503	85	-3*
Fiji (N-28)	700,125	1,159	604	1,098	12

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLDWIDE

location on endsheet maps. Nos. 1-25 front and Nos. 22-46 back endsheet.

1985 Av. Pubs.	1986 No. Bptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
1,777	132	243	26	382,729	1,143	4,610
34	2		3	2,217	38	84
80	12	10	1	18,386	98	340
86	3	5	1	14,620	59	239
16		2	1	4,312	9	52
198	21	28	4	49,072	222	656
53,395	5,587	7,823	877	14,151,278	75,111	149,905
300	43	36	5	75,666	355	1,063
41,299	2,206	4,550	599	8,776,738	21,530	83,976
15,738	804	1,233	235	2,938,026	8,157	28,247
291	17	39	12	75,879	329	1,001
686	109	145	14	231,924	1,314	2,616
17	3	4	1	6,335	39	98
1,411	99	169	16	304,489	1,621	4,102
42	4	12	1	16,698	103	210
20,838	1,180	1,740	302	3,973,912	9,638	42,960
690	60	94	17	176,092	916	3,299
1,386	50	64	64	222,954	1,460	8,383
309	30	50	4	80,198	292	745
4,017	642	895	86	1,490,388	7,433	21,674
44	4	4	1	9,473	68	178
392	46	56	18	108,028	537	1,656
166,925	19,878	17,298	3,055	33,768,325	199,169	533,400
97,370	6,197	10,835	1,213	20,070,729	52,423	198,693
6	1			351	8	38
247	38	76	14	120,692	619	1,235
1,284	88	226	72	378,186	1,051	4,001
340	115	104	12	156,242	889	1,338
80,614	4,431	8,881	1,189	16,175,023	42,875	161,820
193	23	27	7	54,667	370	872
55		6	1	11,569	61	140
1,244	40	143	40	280,610	1,274	2,898
133	6	50	9	80,189	353	1,486
24,691	3,052	3,347	316	6,492,235	42,913	90,290
24,669	3,831	3,392	365	6,523,366	41,501	121,358
1,029	39	79	40	218,189	1,542	4,414
67	11	14	4	19,124	82	265
8,578	641	792	178	1,806,195	11,418	25,990
1,130	116	157	13	305,131	1,890	3,862
1,068	62	113	15	211,224	526	2,282
14,453	481	1,030	240	2,153,524	5,139	23,956
9		1	1	1,132	7	15
205	13	29	7	56,088	196	994
8,596	718	1,316	143	2,329,616	16,358	35,374
8,846	1,011	1,406	147	2,649,519	17,476	49,967
13,640	1,363	2,115	281	3,859,728	21,444	51,151
123	13	38	4	58,287	352	352
			1	127	3	6
88	2	19	4	23,502	54	156
981	122	228	24	353,137	1,336	4,360

Country or Territory	Population	1986 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1986 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1985
Finland (A-9)	4,910,712	16,346	300	15,533	3
France (E-6)	55,282,000	92,397	598	89,785	6
French Guiana (K-44)	84,177	427	197	400	13
Gabon (L-7)	1,000,000	539	1,855	499	8
Gambia (J-4)	700,000	20	35,000	18	6
Germany, F. R.; W. Berlin (D-7)	61,020,500	118,645	514	116,152	2
Ghana (K-6)	12,848,514	32,211	399	28,635	9
Gibraltar (F-5)	28,843	129	224	124	4
Greece (F-9)	9,740,417	23,162	421	22,815	3
Greenland (A-44)	53,406	90	593	85	-6*
Grenada (J-43)	112,000	358	313	340	3
Guadeloupe (J-43)	328,000	4,576	72	4,397	15
Guam (J-24)	118,338	254	466	243	8
Guatemala (J-39)	7,750,000	8,941	867	8,401	8
Guinea (K-4)	5,143,284	218	23,593	151	-1*
Guinea-Bissau (K-4)	600,000	4	150,000	2	-33*
Guyana (K-43)	842,000	1,368	615	1,346	5
Haiti (J-41)	6,000,000	4,443	1,350	4,220	8
Hawaii (H-31)	1,053,900	5,467	193	5,353	5
Honduras (J-39)	4,385,108	4,436	989	4,161	10
Hong Kong (H-20)	5,300,000	1,416	3,743	1,360	9
Iceland (A-3)	242,089	180	1,345	173	15
India (H-15)	800,000,000	7,551	105,946	7,184	6
Ireland (D-5)	5,099,352	2,520	1,024	2,472	3
Israel (G-10)	5,560,000	338	16,450	316	4
Italy (E-7)	56,556,911	139,570	405	134,677	9
Ivory Coast (K-5)	9,273,167	2,340	3,963	2,207	7
Jamaica (J-41)	2,300,000	8,104	284	7,620	3
Japan (F-23)	120,720,542	113,062	1,068	108,702	11
Kenya (L-10)	20,525,000	3,885	5,283	3,686	8
Kiribati (L-27)	63,843	13	4,911	12	-20*
Korea, Republic of (F-21)	41,569,000	44,291	939	41,751	12
Kosrae (K-26)	6,005	26	231	24	4
Lebanon (G-10)	3,000,000	2,344	1,280	2,230	7
Lesotho (P-9)	1,577,000	870	1,813	791	6
Liberia (K-5)	1,800,000	1,405	1,281	1,318	9
Libya (H-8)	3,356,000	14	239,714	5	-44*
Liechtenstein (E-7)	27,076	46	589	43	6
Luxembourg (D-6)	431,200	1,284	336	1,246	6
Macao (H-20)	400,000	22	18,182	19	19
Madagascar (N-12)	10,063,435	2,265	4,443	2,146	14
Madeira (G-4)	266,800	506	527	483	6
Malaysia (K-19)	15,880,000	824	19,272	790	9
Mali (J-6)	7,000,000	55	127,273	50	4
Malta (F-7)	380,000	320	1,188	297	8
Marshall Islands (K-27)	31,042	178	174	150	-4*
Martinique (J-43)	328,566	2,117	155	2,005	14
Mauritius (N-13)	998,471	780	1,280	759	8
Mayotte (N-11)	67,167	20	3,358	18	13
Mexico (H-38)	79,754,346	198,003	403	186,291	15

1985 Av. Pubs.	1986 No. Bptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
15,033	681	1,807	261	2,956,180	7,609	26,022
84,925	6,302	7,440	1,261	18,186,752	54,377	183,225
355	34	47	5	103,769	786	1,592
464	33	36	13	103,553	926	1,942
17	2	6	1	9,552	41	66
114,188	4,954	7,572	1,609	19,715,174	49,405	199,863
26,388	1,522	4,226	523	7,541,196	46,906	122,936
119	6	9	1	20,478	44	181
22,240	708	2,253	340	4,406,110	8,767	40,391
90	2	15	7	23,084	63	172
331	22	51	7	78,926	383	1,224
3,828	458	283	48	870,264	6,397	12,553
224	20	56	2	79,197	420	939
7,787	811	828	130	1,812,752	9,765	29,720
153	4	31	11	53,947	202	725
3				222	3	25
1,281	66	249	29	340,685	1,597	4,899
3,922	699	456	79	1,008,109	7,106	22,530
5,117	322	851	68	1,336,645	4,610	14,659
3,799	370	562	73	1,097,086	6,941	20,080
1,248	96	337	16	516,437	2,163	3,070
151	5	20	3	36,016	122	356
6,805	556	743	278	1,451,088	4,345	21,018
2,403	136	472	80	746,339	1,290	5,129
303	13	30	6	67,093	252	694
123,253	11,714	22,138	2,102	37,291,922	95,109	301,009
2,056	343	396	58	708,591	3,945	8,953
7,375	525	847	170	1,475,270	7,878	24,844
97,823	10,900	46,390	1,809	53,608,147	146,316	263,302
3,422	406	844	102	1,388,095	5,895	13,067
15	2	3	1	4,733	34	113
37,263	4,805	14,807	715	17,252,462	49,498	95,738
23	4	4	1	4,722	41	176
2,087	158	192	52	449,982	1,624	4,972
746	58	95	42	180,573	774	3,597
1,211	114	250	32	430,532	2,386	7,839
9				541	4	16
43	4	4	1	7,184	29	82
1,178	41	104	21	242,777	858	2,818
16	6	6	1	10,594	36	63
1,884	226	234	36	502,124	4,434	10,952
456	47	35	11	87,409	457	1,375
725	53	129	19	235,722	1,297	2,026
48	1	28	1	43,773	221	296
276	27	32	4	66,277	213	574
156	3	45	2	48,240	371	997
1,787	205	235	24	472,628	2,606	5,696
706	48	80	9	168,786	794	1,854
16	2	7	1	11,016	48	56
162,130	22,054	26,859	5,878	47,468,565	300,473	838,467

Country or Territory	Population	1986 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1986 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1985
Montserrat (J-42)	13,076	35	374	32	45
Morocco (G-5)	22,500,000	81	277,778	71	-15*
Nauru (L-26)	6,000	8	750	6	20
Nepal (G-16)	16,000,000	41	390,244	39	11
Netherlands (D-6)	14,529,430	29,507	492	28,367	2
Nevis (J-42)	15,482	39	397	36	6
New Caledonia (N-26)	155,000	889	174	789	16
New Zealand (Q-27)	3,307,084	9,546	346	9,165	6
Niger (J-7)	6,083,000	81	75,099	71	-1*
Nigeria (K-7)	102,900,000	128,461	801	121,670	6
Niue (N-29)	2,500	18	139	15	7
Norway (A-7)	4,167,163	8,189	509	7,929	3
Pakistan (G-14)	97,000,000	252	384,921	231	3
Panama (K-40)	2,227,254	4,811	463	4,480	6
Papua New Guinea (L-23)	3,006,799	1,827	1,646	1,732	5
Paraguay (O-43)	3,366,467	2,401	1,402	2,251	8
Peru (M-41)	20,000,000	23,021	869	21,471	9
Philippines (J-21)	56,000,000	95,746	585	88,174	12
Ponape (K-25)	28,000	74	378	62	-10*
Portugal (F-5)	9,654,000	30,505	316	29,617	7
Puerto Rico (J-42)	3,350,000	21,943	153	21,231	7
Réunion (O-13)	550,500	1,172	470	1,093	17
Rodrigues (N-14)	35,284	25	1,411	23	15
Rota (J-24)	1,274	8	159	7	-30*
Rwanda (L-9)	6,125,000	483	12,681	435	3
Saba (J-42)	972	4	243	4	New
St. Eustatius (J-42)	1,335	6	223	6	200
St. Helena (N-5)	6,000	107	56	97	
St. Kitts (J-42)	36,538	150	244	142	8
St. Lucia (J-43)	120,000	314	382	302	6
St. Maarten (J-42)	15,926	89	179	80	3
St. Pierre & Miquelon (D-43)	6,041	10	604	9	-25*
St. Vincent (J-43)	110,000	161	683	152	17
Saipan (J-24)	20,350	39	522	32	14
San Marino (E-7)	21,240	87	244	86	1
São Tomé (L-7)	100,000	15	6,667	13	44
Senegal (J-4)	6,600,000	476	13,866	451	7
Seychelles (L-13)	70,000	62	1,129	57	24
Sierra Leone (K-4)	3,517,530	682	5,158	635	
Solomon Islands (M-26)	271,259	681	398	649	5
South Africa (P-9)	32,435,207	40,800	795	38,291	8
South-West Africa (O-8)	1,033,196	428	2,414	368	12
Spain (F-5)	38,818,355	65,680	591	63,453	7
Sri Lanka (K-16)	15,900,000	996	15,964	924	10
Sudan (J-9)	23,000,000	256	89,844	240	26
Suriname (K-43)	350,000	1,236	283	1,167	10
Swaziland (O-10)	669,734	960	698	860	13
Swedes (A-8)	8,368,954	20,877	401	20,350	4
Switzerland (E-7)	6,484,800	13,659	475	13,373	5
Tahiti (N-32)	176,516	720	245	683	15

1985 Av. Pubs.	1986 No. Bptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
22	1	3	1	5,289	20	128
84	3	9	3	18,373	51	163
5	1	1		451	5	27
35		4	1	8,068	30	119
27,745	1,102	2,230	310	4,644,903	8,947	48,039
34		7	1	12,530	64	134
683	107	88	8	189,034	954	2,145
8,621	651	1,018	136	1,836,709	5,633	19,933
72	7	16	5	32,388	108	297
115,074	4,828	12,712	2,391	25,585,712	132,220	394,370
14		2	1	2,361	17	82
7,684	390	462	172	1,064,444	2,826	14,960
225	23	43	6	71,186	340	733
4,207	384	527	96	1,019,007	6,980	17,466
1,644	125	185	88	388,459	2,121	8,684
2,092	157	358	35	556,734	2,644	5,696
19,638	2,580	4,380	432	7,015,335	34,296	95,062
78,867	9,070	16,919	2,540	22,963,383	64,641	274,565
69	2	24	1	28,275	156	505
27,751	2,124	2,296	425	5,003,720	21,842	76,212
19,891	1,681	1,988	258	4,181,925	17,959	57,328
938	141	117	14	268,572	1,101	3,062
20		4	1	8,727	41	77
10	1	4		4,925	22	49
424	48	56	14	142,691	798	1,102
2	2	4		3,146	20	22
97	1	1		759	4	34
132	18	20	2	12,241	42	240
285	16	46	5	35,566	185	370
				71,062	349	1,179
78	1	7	1	14,516	74	343
12		1	1	971	3	17
130	14	20	4	38,672	149	436
28	7	14	1	20,035	109	173
85		8	1	19,403	49	188
9	4		1	3,008	57	79
423	35	103	10	185,468	840	1,166
46	4	5	1	14,665	82	188
637	29	131	29	209,446	957	3,266
619	34	85	30	149,808	631	3,160
35,326	3,045	4,761	972	8,984,082	37,641	101,797
328	27	40	11	84,758	385	1,069
59,514	4,801	8,132	938	14,943,952	44,191	142,751
842	91	165	28	287,729	1,148	3,473
191	47	56	4	99,420	732	763
1,063	87	154	19	275,324	1,362	3,888
761	77	190	44	318,700	1,152	2,499
19,612	932	2,319	323	3,825,743	10,230	35,416
12,785	773	801	250	2,332,171	8,057	25,616
596	92	75	10	165,114	985	1,977

Country or Territory	Population	1986 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1986 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1985
Taiwan (H-20)	19,500,000	1,199	16,264	1,121	7
Tanzania (M-10)	21,700,000	2,500	8,680	2,425	
Thailand (J-18)	52,800,000	914	57,768	883	5
Togo (K-6)	2,948,753	3,024	975	2,822	12
Tokelau Islands (M-29)	1,703	6	284	4	33
Tonga (N-29)	98,540	53	1,859	39	11
Trinidad (K-43)	1,162,458	4,558	255	4,335	10
Truk (K-24)	38,650	41	943	36	-5*
Tunisia (G-7)	7,300,000	60	121,667	45	7
Turkey (F-10)	50,000,000	830	60,241	795	4
Turks & Caicos Is. (H-41)	8,000	38	211	33	10
Tuvalu (M-28)	8,582	26	330	23	
Uganda (L-10)	15,500,000	328	47,256	310	4
U.S. of America (F-38)	237,166,000	744,919	318	710,344	5
Uruguay (P-43)	2,921,000	5,862	498	5,596	11
Vanuatu (N-27)	140,000	90	1,556	84	20
Venezuela (K-42)	18,500,000	35,248	525	31,691	15
Virgin Is. (Brit.) (J-42)	12,000	96	125	90	5
Virgin Is. (U.S.) (J-42)	96,000	488	197	464	2
Wallis & Futuna Is. (N-28)	14,000	2	7,000	2	New
Western Samoa (M-29)	165,000	166	994	148	
Yap (K-23)	9,320	36	259	27	-27*
Zaire (L-9)	32,000,000	38,572	830	35,680	4
Zambia (N-9)	6,776,232	64,861	104	57,624	5
Zimbabwe (N-9)	8,241,545	15,790	522	14,557	10
175 Countries	2,955,641		2,808,141		7.1
# 33 Other Countries	273,381		255,148		4.6
GRAND TOTAL (208 countries)	3,229,022		3,063,289		6.9

During the 1986 service year the Watch Tower Society spent \$23,545,801.70 in caring for special pioneers, missionaries, and traveling overseers in their field service assignments.

being thoroughly worked. Confrontations with priests and pastors are frequent, and the resultant discussions enable sincere persons to see who has the truth. A Pentecostal preacher who had told his flock to beware of those who use a strange name, Jehovah, was forced to admit, under pressure from the members of his church, that this is indeed God's name. It caused such a stir that, as some residents were heard to say, "The name Jehovah is the talk of the town."

1985 Av. Pubs.	1986 No. Bptz'd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
1,050	116	258	21	376,037	1,369	3,343
2,420	134	385	83	686,333	2,196	6,968
841	83	166	29	257,328	874	2,128
2,517		248	64	598,545	5,275	8,825
3			1	348	2	36
35	5	9	2	14,929	55	171
3,948	364	753	50	1,120,992	5,881	13,961
38		13	2	19,778	144	400
42		2	1	4,952	20	86
768	35	57	10	153,214	503	1,393
30	8	7	1	13,518	83	131
23	1	5	1	4,815	32	69
297	37	64	11	109,593	729	1,402
678,510	41,697	88,312	8,336	146,673,490	486,426	1,691,297
5,033	654	797	92	1,355,961	3,104	16,828
70	3	12	2	24,364	191	583
27,528	4,008	4,884	307	8,920,847	52,451	128,627
86	5	9	3	19,777	144	399
454	12	50	8	94,507	487	1,748
		1				228
148	15	26	3	43,551	139	436
37	1	8	1	10,047	65	154
34,207	3,191	6,883	1,034	10,638,058	58,552	93,581
55,007	4,834	5,384	1,622	11,078,133	76,530	329,766
13,236	963	1,372	512	2,878,422	12,633	41,334
2,621,260	212,629	381,368	47,449	648,232,167	2,552,797	7,674,412
243,923	13,239	9,926	4,728	32,604,875	173,455	486,185
2,865,183	225,868	391,294	52,177	680,837,042	2,726,252	8,160,597

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLDWIDE: 8,927

* Percentage of decrease

* Work banned and reports are incomplete

In *Argentina*, too, the brothers are having to 'stretch out their tent cloths' to accommodate the influx of new ones. (Isa. 54:2) A peak of 61,373 publishers is now taking part in the work, an increase of 15 percent over the 1985 average. Meeting attendance in most congregations is from 150 to 200 percent of the publisher total.

All seven members of one family are pioneers—father, mother, and five children, the youngest being 15. They hold various part-time jobs, and all

of them cooperate in taking care of the home, even washing their own clothes. What has this industrious family accomplished in the ministry? At present they are conducting 44 home Bible studies. In the last 12 months they have helped 12 people to become a part of Jehovah's organization. When asked why they are all pioneers, the mother answered: "It is because of our great love and appreciation for Jehovah. We cannot forget that our service depends to a great extent on the depth of our appreciation rather than on our circumstances."

The branch in **Chile** reports: "We have had new peaks of 29,340 publishers, 47,065 Bible studies, 50,076 attendance at district conventions, and 90,-290 Memorial attendance. It is amazing how rapidly people are responding to the good news and accepting Bible studies! This service year we have had an 12-percent increase in publishers and a 22-percent increase in Bible studies!" At a parent-teacher meeting in Chile, the parents were expressing their opinion about the need to prepare their children to adapt to modern society. A lawyer who is studying with Jehovah's Witnesses told the group that if they were going to prepare their children to adapt to this society they would have to teach them to lie, steal, and be immoral. Rather, they should teach their children to be different, just as Noah and Lot were. The societies of those days perished, but those who were different and harmonized their lives with God survived. What a surprise for those in attendance! A good witness was given by this well-respected person.

Many branches in Central and South America are

very busy with branch construction, nearly all of which is accomplished by volunteers, hundreds of whom have come from foreign countries.

PRAISING OUR CREATOR IN EUROPE

"Know that Jehovah is God. It is he that has made us, and not we ourselves." (Ps. 100:3) It is hard to get this Scriptural truth across in European countries, where atheism, materialism, and spiritual apathy hold sway. So the book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* is truly a boon!

For example, **Denmark** reports several peaks of publishers, the last being in August, when they reached 15,186. The *Creation* book has been of great importance to the work there and is offered with enthusiasm. A man who had seen it wrote to the Society: "Please send your masterpiece *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* to the following [10] addresses." Money for books and postage was included. One brother wrote: "My goal was to work zealously with the book and try to reawaken the 'old days' when we placed a lot of books . . . I set the goal at 25 books for the month. . . . It was not too high . . . I placed 35." A brother related that he started studying the *Creation* book with a man who was a staunch evolutionist. After a few months' study, this man believed in God, came to the public talk of the circuit overseer in the Kingdom Hall, and happily attended the circuit assembly in the new Assembly Hall.

In the **Netherlands**, a brother who works for a large company was extremely happy when the *Creation* book came out. The nature of his work there

was related to science and culture, so he could make a special effort to recommend the book to fellow employees. He used the illustration of the cell on pages 48 and 49, and this evoked much interest. On the first day of offering the book, he took eight orders and was paid in advance. In a short period the brother distributed 40 *Creation* books as well as 2 Bibles and 24 other books. During the 12 years that he has worked for this firm, he has sown "seed" to the extent of 350 books and dozens of magazines.

In addition to such spiritually upbuilding work, much literal building is also progressing in Europe. In **France**, where a peak of 92,397 publishers reported in August, four Assembly Halls and ten quickly built Kingdom Halls have recently been erected, and more are planned.

In **Belgium**, where the latest peak of publishers is 22,202, Kingdom Halls have to be enlarged, and new ones are being constructed. For the first time, a Kingdom Hall was built in two days, to be followed by a second one. This has resulted in a tremendous witness in the country. Newspapers, radio, and TV were impressed at seeing volunteer Witnesses from England, the Netherlands, and France working along with the Belgian brothers. A contractor was approached for the purpose of renting equipment for the two-day Kingdom Hall construction. He said to the brothers: 'It is impossible to build in such a short time. If you succeed, you will not have to pay rent for the equipment.' The brothers did not have to pay rent!

Quickly built Kingdom Halls have also been a success in **Norway**. So far, 12 such halls have been

completed, and 30 more are planned. The latest one was built in Kirkenes, a few miles from the Russian border. The newspapers gave these building programs great publicity. One editor wrote: "Fantastic! This is the only word that can describe what happened last weekend when Jehovah's Witnesses came flocking to help the local congregation. This is a spirit that is missing in most areas today. What the local congregation has done together with fellow believers inspires deep respect."

Portugal reports: "The service year commenced with footings being laid for the new Bethel Home. This much-needed facility is the first Bethel the brothers have been privileged to build. How thrilling to see they have contributed to cover all building expenses to date even though this country has the poorest standard of living in all of Western Europe! This single event has sparked great interest in Jehovah's visible organization." The service year in Portugal was marked by a peak of 30,505 publishers and a record Memorial attendance of 76,212.

An elder in Portugal relates concerning informal witnessing: "During my lunch hour I placed a *Creation* book with a colleague. We would only meet occasionally, but each time there was a brief conversation about the truth. As he manifested doubt in the Bible's inspiration, I placed with him the book *Is the Bible Really the Word of God?* One day a Witness called at his home when he was out and left the tract offering the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. He made it a point to find me on the lunch hour and request this publication. After this, it was amazing to see his progress just through

reading the book himself. He shaved off his beard and improved his hairstyle and general appearance. Then he surprised me by saying he was now convinced this was the truth and had decided to associate with Jehovah's Witnesses. The previous Sunday he had looked for a Kingdom Hall in the area where he lived and had already attended his first meeting. It was then that a home Bible study was started, and after only three months, he was attending all meetings regularly and was a zealous publisher, eagerly awaiting baptism at the "Divine Peace" District Convention."

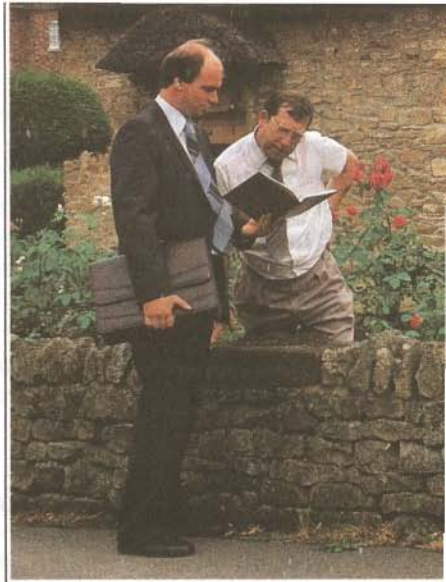
Jehovah's Witnesses in **Finland** recently dedicated a large new addition to the branch facilities. We are well known in Finland, as the ratio is now almost one publisher to 300 inhabitants. More and more people are coming to the meetings because they can see the good living habits and moral standards of the Witnesses.

Likewise, in **Austria**, where construction of a big extension to the branch is nearing completion, the fine Christian conduct of our pioneer ministers at places of employment has repeatedly contributed to opening up part-time jobs. One sister relates: "A pioneer has been working for a tax adviser, and she was highly respected for her good work. Another employer asked this tax adviser whether he could recommend an honest part-time worker. The tax adviser told him to call at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses since they very often desire part-time work. Because of the good conduct of this pioneer, I was able to get that part-time job and now also enjoy pioneer privileges."

Castle Combe, England

Cyprus writes that magazine street work, once a weak feature there, is catching on with the brothers. All congregations in the large towns are regularly using every Saturday morning for sidewalk witnessing. Even young children enjoy this work. For instance, a boy of six working with his mother distributed 20 magazines. He said to his mother: "I place the magazines and you report them, but I would like to be a publisher." Recently an opposer, who claims he was sent by the Orthodox Church in Greece, has appeared with other rowdies outside the Kingdom Hall in Limassol. This noisy group not only tries to disturb the meetings but follows the brothers into the field and tries to discourage householders from listening to the Kingdom message. However, the brothers have stymied this tactic by holding meetings for service in small groups in private homes.

Spain joyfully reports a peak of 65,680 publishers and, with only three exceptions, a new peak in regular pioneers for each of the past 40 months. The tiny country of **Andorra** also registered splendid increases, finally reaching a peak of 108 publishers.



While full freedom to preach is enjoyed in Spain, such is not the case with one of Spain's former colonies, the republic of Equatorial Guinea. In December, our Kingdom Halls there were sealed by government order. A so-called religious liberty law was presented to the country's legislative body but was rejected because of that body's evident prejudice against Jehovah's Witnesses. One of the deputies whose wife is a Witness made an eloquent defense of our standards and moral norms before the legislature.

AFRICA SEES "A GREAT LIGHT"

The light of truth is beaming into every corner of the vast continent of Africa. As in the days of Jesus' preaching here on earth, many people are seeing "a great light."—Matt. 4:16.

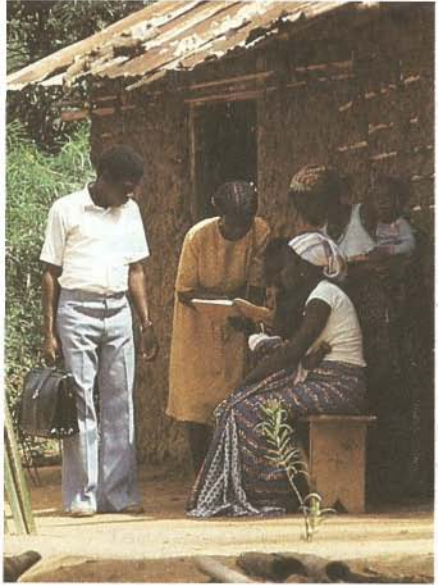
These include even young children. In *Senegal*, a Bible study was begun with the mother of a boy of seven. Her son often asked questions about God, so a study was started with him also, using the brochure *Enjoy Life on Earth Forever!* When he saw Picture 58 in the brochure, he understood right away Jehovah's attitude toward idols. One day the father asked his young son to go to church, but the boy strongly objected: "The church is full of idols, and Jehovah does not like that!" The son's attitude aroused the father's interest in the Bible, and now a regular study is held with the entire family. How true are Jesus' words: "Out of the mouth of babes . . . you have furnished praise!"—Matt. 21:16.

From the *Ivory Coast* comes a heartwarming report about a family of 12 that is affectionately called the "great crowd." During the yearly vacation

the family decided to do all they could in the ministry, so five members (the father, mother, and three baptized children) enrolled as auxiliary pioneers. Two other children who are not yet baptized are also cultivating the pioneer spirit and closed ranks with the five in making an extra effort. Goals were set, too, for the five youngest ones. At the end of the month the "great crowd" family could report 637 hours of field service, 460 brochures and 350 magazines distributed, 189 return visits, and 25 Bible studies. They wrote: "It was such an agreeable month, and we strongly felt how the family bonds were strengthened. We thank Jehovah for the wonderful blessing!"

In *Burkina Faso*, where water is scarce and the desert is advancing, our brothers look forward to a literal fulfillment of Isaiah 35:1: "The wilderness and the waterless region will exult, and the desert plain will be joyful and blossom as the saffron." However, they are now seeing the prophecy fulfilled in its major spiritual sense, and this gives them joy and hope. Kingdom publishers grew to a total of 324. Their peak of 717 Bible studies and the Memorial attendance of 1,235 show also that 'the heat parched ground has become a reedy pool, and the thirsty ground as springs of water.' Jehovah keeps making it grow.—Isa. 35:7; 1 Cor. 3:6.

The 32,211 Witnesses in *Ghana* widely advertised the Memorial of Christ's death, with the result that 122,936 were in attendance. A university student expressed himself this way after the celebration: "I have attended Communion many times in my church, but this is quite different. I see that this



Nyakokwaa,
Ghana

is just like what the Bible says, and I think you have the truth." This person attended the very next meeting following the Memorial and has continued ever since. He was baptized recently.

Construction work on Ghana's new branch building, most of which is being done by 140 local volunteers, moves rapidly toward comple-

tion. It is of interest that 42 foreign volunteer construction workers are rotating between the Portugal, Ghana, and Nigeria projects, according to the need for their trade skills. These come from the United States (25), Canada (2), Sweden (6), Britain (4), Germany (2), the Netherlands (2), and Australia (1). At least all can speak the pure language of truth!—Zeph. 3:9.

Construction work on the new Bethel complex for **Nigeria** is progressing very well. Deer and antelope in the woods on this property are becoming accustomed to the construction activities and are not afraid to come out in the open at evening time. Since the property is completely walled in, it is hoped that they will remain to adorn the Bethel grounds. Nigeria reported an all-time peak of 128,-461 publishers in July. Regular and auxiliary pio-

neers continue to increase, and this is having a powerful impact on the territory. During house-to-house work in April, an elder was told: "In the past two to three weeks the preaching of you people has intensified. Does it mean that the end is at hand?" The elder pointed to recent events throughout the world and showed that it is urgent to help people to learn the truth. The man agreed that he needed to do something about it without delay.

Exciting developments in **Liberia** include renovation of an expanded branch home and a Memorial attendance of 7,839, almost six times the number of publishers. A sister who teaches in a government school was asked to give Bible instruction to all the primary classes, using *My Book of Bible Stories* and the brochure *Enjoy Life on Earth Forever!* Now, each day, the sister enjoys sharing the truth about Jehovah's purposes with the students.

In **Zimbabwe**, as fervor for political participation is whipped up, our young ones are presented with real tests of their faith. Some have been threatened and others have been expelled from school. In one school neighborhood, opposers even went so far as to burn down the local Kingdom Hall. However, our youth continue to give a fine witness at school. With the help of *My Book of Bible Stories*, one 15-year-old girl settled a debate that had arisen in class. The teacher was so impressed that she asked for a copy. After reading some of it, she asked for other literature. This young sister now writes: "Every morning I am given a chance to speak to the class, and I have a special Bible-question time with the class." She is happy about this privilege of remembering her Creator in the days of her youth!—Eccl. 12:1.

STANDING "SOLID IN THE FAITH" IN ASIA

Many of our brothers in Asia serve under great pressure. But Jehovah has equipped them to stand "solid in the faith." (1 Pet. 5:9) For example, in strife-torn **Lebanon** the brothers rejoice to have the booklet *Examining the Scriptures Daily*. For the first time, they can read the day's Bible text and its comment in Arabic in the one publication. In one large family, every child, even the youngest boy, age five, has a personal booklet. They all bring their Bibles and booklets to the breakfast table, and a lively Bible study session ensues. The five-year-old got used to the habit and also brings his booklet to dinner and to supper for text discussion.

In **Israel**, bearded mobsters had continued demonstrating in front of the Tel Aviv branch and Kingdom Hall. But the police moved in and put a stop to their rowdy behavior. More than a hundred neighbors called at the branch at different times to express sympathy. A young Bedouin working across the street became curious, studied, and accepted the truth. He changed his job to conform to Bible principles and is now witnessing from house to house. Lawless opposers in another area gave mass distribution to an abusive tract that included the name and address of the local pioneers. But this boomeranged on the opposers when a lady who had been wanting to contact the Witnesses found the tract in her letter box. She looked up the pioneers, and they started a home Bible study with her.

This was a turbulent year in the island paradise of **Sri Lanka**. Papers had headings like: "War in Paradise," 'A Nation at War With Itself.' But Jehovah's

Witnesses are at peace with one another, regardless of race or background. Publishers reached a peak of 996. The pioneer spirit is growing in the hearts of many who see the diminishing value of material assets and the increasing value of spiritual pursuits. This is reflected in a 43.7-percent increase in regular and auxiliary pioneers.

Reginald is a young special pioneer in Sri Lanka who has good teaching ability. He has about 20 home Bible studies. He explains to them that he is not alone but with a congregation and enthusiastically tells them about the wonderful meetings that they should attend. Many of his students are to be seen at the meetings.

What will life be like in **Hong Kong** after the territory returns to Chinese sovereignty in 1997? What will be the dangers of life when a nuclear power plant is built just 30 miles (50 km) from the city? These are two big questions on the minds of the people there. Many are leaving this territory, and others are planning to leave. In such an atmosphere it is heartwarming to see our 1,416 brothers and sisters showing firm faith in Jehovah's promises and putting the interests of his Kingdom first in their lives. A special pioneer started a study with a Roman Catholic man, whose wife, brother, and mother were opposed to his studying with Jehovah's Witnesses. But in trying to talk him out of studying, his brother also became interested in the truth and started to study. These two brothers were employed in making idols. When, after a few weeks of study, the folly of idol worship became clear to them, they destroyed all their idols as well as the tools used to

make them. One of them learned painting and supports his family now by painting homes. He resigned from the Catholic Church, started out in the field ministry, and is looking forward to getting baptized. The wives of both of the men also became interested in the truth and started attending meetings. It is so gratifying to see such families making good progress in the worship of the living God, Jehovah.

The **Republic of Korea** reports that the big thing again this year has been the amazing pioneer spirit. Including the auxiliary pioneers, one third of the publishers have been in some form of full-time service on the average each month.

Because of much unfavorable publicity on the blood issue, many doctors and hospitals in Korea have refused to treat the brothers. When a sister in Inchon needed stomach surgery and requested that it be done without blood transfusions, the doctors responded with rantings about Jehovah's Witnesses being inhuman, fanatical, a pseudoreligion, and so forth. The sister tactfully dropped the subject just then but gave the doctors a copy of the book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* The next time the doctors came to her room their attitude had changed completely. They commented that the material in the *Creation* book was presented in a very scientific and logical way. The doctors said, "If your religion studies such matters on such a high level, then you must have a very logical reason for refusing blood transfusions." They successfully performed the surgery without blood.

AMONG ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC

"Hear the word of Jehovah, O you nations, and tell it among the islands far away." (Jer. 31:10) In obedi-

Seoul, Republic of Korea

ence to these prophetic words, Jehovah's Witnesses are zealously preaching throughout the vast domain of the Pacific Ocean.

This includes **Micronesia**, where 738 publishers and pioneers (including 49 missionaries) serve the island districts of Guam, Belau, Kiribati, Kosrae, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Ponape,

Rota, Saipan, Truk, and Yap. A new peak of 1,735 Bible studies was reached in May, a 32-percent increase, and 3,743 attended the Memorial. A school-teacher and former politician who had studied in Truk for one year returned to his isolated outer-island home. There he began to tell others about the things he had learned. One day he heard on the radio an announcement of the Memorial observance on the main island, 20 miles (32 km) away. He invited his neighbors to rise early and join him in catching a 6:30 a.m. ferry to attend. A former Protestant minister readily accepted, and despite torrential rains they took the trip. Both enjoyed the Memorial discourse immensely. They set aside time the next day to hear the missionaries explain further truths and then returned to their outer island. This teacher's love and appreciation for Jehovah



continues to grow. He is now conducting a Bible study in Trukese with the former Protestant minister, using *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*—the book that helped him to know the true God, Jehovah.

In **Papua New Guinea**, an imposing new branch facility is nearing completion; 240 Australian brothers, as well as many native brothers, volunteered to help with construction. When accommodations were needed for the workers, the local parliament offered them a side building if they would move it out quickly. Sixty brothers moved it in just nine hours! With its 1,827 publishers, the territory has a total of 8,000 associating at the meetings. But it is a mammoth task to teach these, as they speak 600 languages and 400 dialects!

There were several incidents involving overzealous schoolteachers who singled out the children of Jehovah's Witnesses and punished them for not saluting the flag or singing the anthem. In most cases when the children or parents presented the brochure *School and Jehovah's Witnesses* to the individuals concerned, the problem was quickly resolved. A representative of the Religious Affairs Department of the government also advised the branch office, saying that he had straightened out the thinking of one headmaster who had caused trouble in the past.

On one of the islands of **Vanuatu**, more than a hundred people attended the Memorial, though there are only four publishers on that island. Members of an ethnic group called *small nambas* came down from the mountains and heard the Memorial talk. They were very surprised to learn that there is

a hope for everlasting life on earth. At the end, they made this comment: "It is what we want! We left our churches to go back to our customs because we don't want to go to heaven; we would like to live on earth forever. Please tell us if our customs are agreeable to your God." All through the night, the brothers explained in their local languages the marvelous future that Jehovah holds in store for all mankind.

"I have overcome a number of obstacles to become a special pioneer," wrote a young sister in **Fiji**. "Before taking up the truth, I was influenced by young teenage peers to seek riches and 'the good life.' I met an Australian Caucasian who wanted to marry me and live in Australia. But then the truth intervened in my life. When the man came back to Fiji, he put \$600 in my hand to help with wedding arrangements. It is rare that a young Fijian girl has such a sum on her hands. But I returned the money, explaining that I could marry 'only in the Lord.' (1 Cor. 7:39) This angered my worldly parents, who, like other Fijian families, look on a marriage alliance with a Caucasian as a family asset. So they would have nothing further to do with me.



"I progressed in the truth to the point of qualifying for pioneer service, and just when I applied for it, the Australian man appeared again to see if I had changed my mind. I explained that my determination to serve Jehovah was firmer than ever. This service year I was appointed as a special pioneer, and I am happy to be used by Jehovah to do his work, as I take 'a firm hold on the real life.'"—1 Tim. 6:19.

In the **Cook Islands**, two recently baptized Witnesses were formerly respected members of the local "Christian Church." They are now busy witnessing to past associates. One brother excels at informal witnessing and keeps Bibles in his car, his tractor, and his place of business. He is helping nine inmates of the local jail. Because they were allowed out of jail periodically on work projects, the brother hired them, witnessed to them, and now studies with them. He engages regularly in the auxiliary pioneer service. This brother, prior to studying the truth, could not read or write.

At the close of the service year, the Bethel family in **New Zealand** moved into its beautifully appointed new branch home, situated on 17 acres (6.8 ha) of bayside property on the outskirts of Auckland and constructed entirely by the voluntary labors of our brothers.

A circuit overseer in New Zealand makes a point of calling on *every* house in the territory. He and his companion witnessed at a Presbyterian youth hostel. During the conversation the master of the hostel informed the brothers that the hostel's youthful residents complained persistently of learning nothing from church services. The circuit overseer was invit-

ed to come and study the Bible with these boys. Arrangements were made for a local brother to fulfill this responsibility, and 22 were present for the first study. To meet the individual needs of the students better, the number of conductors was increased to five and then to ten. Fourteen of the youthful hostel residents attended the Memorial at the Kingdom Hall. The hostel authorities are pleased with "the great job that is being done with the boys."

In the parched center of **Australia**, an island almost as large as the continental United States, the Alice Springs Congregation cares regularly for several isolated groups of Aborigines. One settlement of 150 Aborigines is 188 miles (300 km) away, mostly by dirt road. Spiritism is quite strong among them, but they are humble, friendly, and teachable. Many have come to appreciate the truth and some are even in the full-time service. Recently, an Aboriginal pioneer brother pulled into a service station to fill his gas tank. As he was neatly dressed in suit and tie, the owner asked him what he was doing. The pioneer explained that he was one of Jehovah's Witnesses and was helping the Aboriginal people to live better lives. This impressed the owner, who wished our brother well and said: "There will be no charge for the petrol [gasoline]." The brother later returned, bringing along with him a copy of the *Live Forever* book. The owner gladly accepted the book. The next time our brother went to fill his tank, the man expressed his appreciation for the book and thanked our brother for coming and then said once again: "No charge for the petrol!"

At the Society's Australia branch, a three-story office addition is being built, as the publisher peak in that land grows to 44,362.

'SPEAKING THE WORD OF GOD FEARLESSLY'

As in the apostle Paul's time, there are places on earth today where Jehovah's Witnesses must show "all the more courage to speak the word of God fearlessly." (Phil. 1:14) How are our brothers in those lands facing up to bans, beatings, and other persecutions in order to "declare abroad the kingdom of God"? Please note the figures under "33 Other Countries" at the foot of the Worldwide Report on pages 40-41. Jehovah has answered our prayers "more than superabundantly" in empowering these 273,381 Witnesses to 'let their light shine'—and brilliantly at that!—Luke 9:60; Eph. 3:20; Matt. 5:16.

A country in *Europe* writes: "The family had a very fine time in the field. We tried to supply them with the food needed in their work, and they used this material very effectively. During the years of underground work since we came out of the concentration camps 40 years ago, our activity keeps on increasing; we are conducting more Bible studies and return visits are coming up. More and more we spend our time in the actual house work, and more people are coming in contact with the good news. The time spent in this work is climbing, and more auxiliary pioneers are using their time wisely."

Another European country reports: "Just prior to Christmas, when the people go about purchasing gifts, one sister offered them the Bible as the most valuable gift, with fine results. In four months she

placed 150 Bibles. When the festive days were over, she continued to offer the Bible. Approaching a young couple on the street, she asked: 'Do you have any questions about the Bible?' 'Oh, yes,' said the husband, 'Where can I get one?' The sister handed him one right away. He said to the wife: 'You should hold onto this book and never let it go, now that we have one.' Then they gave her their address so that she could call and study with them. This sister purchases the Bibles in the bookstores and places them with the people at the same price."

A branch in the *Pacific Islands*, where Jehovah's work is banned, states: "Reports and complaints have been piling up in various government offices, resulting in many brothers being called up for interrogations. This has led to some court cases." However, as the brothers are friendly and use good judgment, relatively few persons report them and many officials do not press matters. Opposition has served only to further publicize Jehovah's Witnesses and their work, as they continue even to witness at the people's homes.—Matt. 10:12, 13, 16, 19, 20.

In a country in *Africa*, several Witnesses were taken to a military camp where the sisters and brothers were separated. A friendly soldier advised the sisters to shout loudly if the officers wanted to do anything bad to them. They replied that they had already determined to do this. They prayed fervently to Jehovah for his protection. One of the sisters relates: "While we sat quietly, the leader came and forcefully grabbed my arms and twisted them round my back. Holding me tightly, he tried to force me to the floor. I wriggled my arms free and pushed him

against the door. His arm was hurt, and so he called his fellow soldiers to help him." Finally, the other soldiers said they would report the matter to their superiors. So this officer let our sister go. As she walked homeward, one of the soldiers approached and said: "The one who has allowed you to go is not him but your God. Go and worship Him even more."

Nearby, in another restricted country in *Africa*, a special pioneer studies with an entire family. Concerning their four-year-old daughter, he reports: "When her parents were out, the neighbors tried to persuade the little girl to smoke a cigarette, telling her that it would give her strength all day long. She refused, saying: 'I want to respect my father even if he is not here to see me. Papa taught me that cigarettes are poison and that the Bible forbids them because they dirty the body that Jehovah gave us.' The neighbors were so impressed by the child's answer that they told her parents about it and arranged to study with the Witnesses." How wise it is to have small children share in Bible studies!

In another country in *Africa* where our work recently came under a ban, most congregations had to meet in small groups for the Memorial. They also had to be careful about inviting newly interested ones. This explains why attendance is less than last year, though the actual figure is still nearly three times the number of publishers. The brothers in one town were betrayed by a churchgoer of Babylon the Great. This person told soldiers that on the night of March 24, Jehovah's Witnesses must come and worship in their Kingdom Hall. The soldiers waited there from five o'clock until midnight, but the brothers, who were meeting in small groups, never came.

Informal witnessing

The next day the informer was called, beaten, and fined \$100 for giving wrong information!

In another part of the same country, a local chief held a special meeting to speak against Jehovah's Witnesses. He tried to incite the people and held up a copy of *My Book of Bible Stories*. He told them that they should arrest anyone going around with that book. His rantings only stimulated the curiosity of some of the local people, who asked to see the book. They told the chief that they must examine it in order to recognize it. The chief allowed them to do this, and when they turned its pages, they were filled with appreciation. They sent word to the special pioneer (who lived in another village) to bring some books, and they contributed for ten copies. The special pioneer relates: "Thus I was able to start ten Bible studies, and some of these new ones are progressing toward field service! I had never preached in the chief's village, and if the chief had not spoken against us, then maybe these ones would not have had the occasion to learn the truth." Jehovah can use even our opposers to direct honest ones to Bible truth.



In another country in *Africa*, a problem arose with regard to burial places for Jehovah's Witnesses, since these are not a legally recognized religion. The brothers boldly presented the matter to the local authorities and were able to obtain a plot of land within the municipality. More recently, the local authorities felt that cemeteries of religious groups had become too ostentatious, so they decided to establish a modest standard. When they came to the cemetery of the brothers, they saw an example of the modesty that they wanted, and after inquiring as to whose cemetery it was, they immediately decreed that in the future all graves and tombs should follow the pattern set by Jehovah's Witnesses.

Still another report from *Africa* exemplifies the integrity-keeping spirit that is so outstanding among Jehovah's Witnesses: "In spite of arrests, beatings, and imprisonments, our courageous brothers and sisters continue to give an ever bigger witness, especially in the interior. The sterling examples of faithful overseers incite the brothers to fine works. In January the first circuit was officially organized. The circuit overseer had himself been imprisoned for several months but was released just before the district convention. Even new ones are not afraid to be arrested for practicing the way of truth. During the year, 101 were baptized, and two new congregations were formed. A new peak of 572 publishers was reached in June, the congregation publishers showing their zeal by averaging over 15 hours a month in the field service. Over a thousand Bible studies are being reported, so prospects for future increase are great."

ACTS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN MODERN TIMES

As Jehovah's Witnesses zealously carry out the responsibility to preach "this good news of the kingdom" in all the inhabited earth, they have in mind the counsel given by the apostle Paul to Timothy, namely: "Fully accomplish your ministry." (Matt. 24: 14; 2 Tim. 4:5) This moves them to use every appropriate means to reach people with the Kingdom message, as the following reports show.

PUERTO RICO AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS: The first witnesses of Jehovah visited there in the early 1930's. Today, Kingdom Halls throughout the islands are packed and overflowing. Every nook and corner in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands is receiving a witness regularly. Some territories are worked every week or so, and new ones are continuing to respond favorably to Bible truth.

SWITZERLAND AND LIECHTENSTEIN: For 95 years Jehovah's servants there have been publicizing the fact that lasting peace on earth will come only under the Kingdom of God, and they have done it in the face of much opposition. They have gone into the most remote alpine mountain valleys to preach. Their attention has been directed not only to those who speak the four Swiss national languages but also to the many thousands of "guest workers" who have moved into the country. Large numbers of these have appreciatively accepted the good news.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: During the past 74 years the territory has been covered repeatedly, but the zeal of Jehovah's Witnesses has not abated. In recent years over 50 percent have participated in the auxiliary pioneer service during certain months, and as the report shows, their labors have not been in vain.

May these accounts help you to remain firm in faith and to accomplish your ministry thoroughly.

PUERTO RICO

AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS



PUERTO RICO is one of the more densely populated areas in the world. Additionally, the pleasant climate and sandy beaches attract many visitors. There is appealing variety in the land, as the mountains of the interior give way to low hills and fertile plains in coastal regions. But this is a relatively small place, measuring only about 110 miles (180 km) from east to west and 40 miles (64 km) from north to south.

This Caribbean island has some 3,500,000 inhabitants. About a million of them are located in and around San Juan, the capital. Large numbers are also found in Ponce on the south coast, Mayagüez to

Puerto Rico

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the west, Arecibo to the north, and Caguas in the midst of the mountains.

The original Indian population was practically exterminated by Spanish explorers. So who live here today? They are largely descendants of the Spanish and of slaves that were brought in from Africa. Because of this heritage, Spanish is the dominant language, and many of the people are Roman Catholic. But in 1898, after the Spanish-American War, the island was ceded to the United States, thus opening the way to a diversity of Protestant groups.

The first Spanish governor here, early in the 16th century, named the original colonial settlement Puerto Rico (meaning "rich port") because they were shipping out much gold. More recently, however, there were people who came, not to exploit the wealth of the land, but to help the inhabitants to benefit personally from riches far more precious than gold.

GETTING THE KINGDOM WORK UNDER WAY

While making a tour of Latin America in the early 1930's, Robert Montero visited Puerto Rico to determine what could be done to share with others the priceless good news of God's Kingdom. In his report to the Watch Tower Society's main office in New York, he stated that Puerto Rico was a fertile field for the preaching work and recommended that the Society send full-time Kingdom proclaimers, or pioneers, to the island. He reported that there was just one Witness: John Dahlberg, who was about 70 years old and was engaged in the fishing business at Puerto Real on the east coast. Brother Dahlberg's

preaching activity was quite limited at the time because he had very little knowledge of Spanish, but he offered complete cooperation to any Witnesses that might come to Puerto Rico to spread the Kingdom message.

The first to respond to the invitation to serve here were Brother and Sister Colin McLarty, a couple in their early 70's. They arrived in the winter of 1932. With Bible literature announcing God's Kingdom, they called at the governor's mansion and at police headquarters. They placed publications with a judge of the U.S. District Court. They also witnessed to schoolteachers during recess periods. For four or five months they visited people in their homes and places of business. Accompanying their meager knowledge of Spanish with some sign language, they endeavored to interest others in the truth of God's Word. But when they were preparing to leave, they reported that what they had accomplished was "nothing in view of the work that is needed to be done."

TWO PIONEER SISTERS ARRIVE

In 1935 two pioneer sisters, Lillian Carr and Marie Hawkins, came from Rochester, New York, to share the life-giving Kingdom message with the warm-hearted Puerto Ricans. Being in new surroundings, they at first worked together. Later they concentrated on separate areas. In Aguadilla and Mayagüez on the west coast and in Ponce to the south, Sister Carr primarily placed Bible literature with people, as she was unable to converse in Spanish. However, in that way many "seeds" of Kingdom truth were sown during the next 15 years.

Meanwhile, Sister Hawkins worked for ten years

in San Juan and other cities in the northern and eastern parts of the island. Like Sister Carr, she had only very limited knowledge of Spanish. But she made an effort to call back on persons who showed interest, and she conducted Bible studies to the best of her ability.

FIRST PUERTO RICAN WITNESSES

Sister Hawkins did not witness personally to Ambrosio Rosa García near Arecibo, but she did place a booklet with a friend of his. In 1938 that friend gave the booklet, *Universal War Near*, to Mr. Rosa. Though Mr. Rosa was a practitioner of spiritism, he was deeply impressed by the contents of this publication. At once he obtained more literature by mail from the Society's New York office. Soon he became convinced that what he was reading was the truth, and he began to share this newfound knowledge with others.

Recognizing the Roman Catholic religion to be false, he refused to allow his eldest daughter to take first Communion in the church. That led to a visit from the local priest. But Ambrosio was well able to defend what he believed, making good use of the knowledge he had acquired from the Bible.

He realized that he must share the good news with others, so he went preaching from house to house, even though it meant doing so alone and without training. Here was a man of faith who had strong love for Jehovah! As far as he knew, he was the only servant of Jehovah on the island. Yet, he was willing to go right ahead and teach others what he knew of God's purposes. When he learned that in the United States recorded Bible messages were being used to

spread the truth, he ordered a portable phonograph and some records in Spanish from the Society. And he put these to good use.

One day when he was playing the phonograph across the street from the Catholic church in Arecibo, a man asked him to put on the discourse "Face the Facts." Part of this exposed the political activity of the Catholic Church. When the recording told about the practices of the church during the Spanish civil war, the man ran to fetch the local priest. The priest accused Brother Rosa of being a "fifth columnist" and anti-American, but Brother Rosa knew the facts. Strengthened by Jehovah's spirit, he was able to point out that it was, in fact, the priests who were the "fifth column" and anti-American because of their support for Hitler and Mussolini. He also asked the priest why he had people address him as "Father" when the Bible forbids such a practice. (Matt. 23:9) The priest retreated, but now a policeman threatened to arrest Brother Rosa. Once again he stood his ground, explaining that he had a constitutional right to preach God's Word in the public square. At this the priest and the policeman held a consultation; then both disappeared.

Among those to whom Ambrosio witnessed in Arecibo was Santiago Rodríguez, Sr., a store clerk who was in his 40's. At first Santiago told Brother Rosa that he had his own religion and really was not interested. But after a while Ambrosio persuaded him to subscribe for the Spanish *Watchtower* magazine for just six months. When the magazines came, Santiago read them and soon recognized that what he was learning was the truth. Before long he was out preaching with Brother Rosa.



Ambrosio Rosa García, one of the first native baptized Witnesses in Puerto Rico; shown here with his wife Lydia

Jehovah blessed their efforts, and a small group of interested persons began to gather together. It was then that these two men began to realize the need to "consecrate" (or, dedicate) themselves to Jehovah and to get baptized. But who was there to baptize them? They knew of no other Witnesses in Puerto Rico. What would they do? After prayerful thought, they gathered the group together and all went to a small river near Arecibo, where Ambrosio first baptized Santiago and then Santiago baptized Ambrosio, to become the first native baptized witnesses of Jehovah in Puerto Rico. This was on January 18, 1940. Later, others in the group were baptized, and on June 8 of that year the Arecibo Company (or, Congregation) of Jehovah's Witnesses was organized.

BEING A WITNESS WAS NOT EASY

In the meantime another group of Jehovah's servants was developing in Santurce, a large section of the capital city of San Juan. When working in that area, Marie Hawkins had conducted a study with Mrs. Leonor Román, and she, too, began to spread

the good news. Her husband joined her, conducting Bible studies in their home, and their six-year-old daughter accompanied her mother in the field service. This small group in Santurce was organized into a congregation in May 1940. But when Sister Román became ill, activity died down. So on September 1, 1941, this small congregation was removed from the list.

Three years later another congregation was formed in San Juan. But, again, because of the lack of leadership, it did not thrive at that time.

Yet, some seemed to be willing to exert themselves in Jehovah's service even though there were very few Witnesses. Two individuals who lived in the interior submitted applications for pioneer service. They were assigned the entire district of Guayama, on the south side of the island. Their work proved to be largely one of distributing literature. No doubt this aided some to come in touch with the truth. Unfortunately, however, it seems that the principal motive of these two men was to sell books. So after a while their activity ceased.

Being one of Jehovah's servants was not easy. Often there was little encouragement available from others. Each one had to put up a hard fight for the faith.

ARRIVAL OF GILEAD GRADUATES

Soon a new era dawned in Puerto Rico. Some of the first missionaries to graduate from the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead were assigned to Puerto Rico. In March of 1944 when the *China Clipper* landed at Isla Grande Airport in San Juan, four of those missionaries were on board: Leo and Eunice Van

Daalen, Leo's brother Emil, and their cousin Donald. Sister Hawkins was there to meet them, thrilled that now there would be mature help to cultivate the Puerto Rican field.

What attitudes and practices did these missionaries find among the people in Puerto Rico? Generally, they were kind, generous, hospitable people, content with a place to sleep and with food and clothing. They were also religious, mostly of the Catholic faith. It was quite common to see a statue of a "patron saint" being carried in a procession by chanting priests and other worshipers. In many homes could be seen tiny altars bedecked with images and pictures of "saints" before which candles burned constantly. Spiritism was widely practiced, but generally those involved in it were good Catholics as well. There were also quite a few, known as *evangélicos*, who had broken away from Catholicism and embraced the Protestant sects introduced by North Americans.

MISSIONARIES BEGIN TO PREACH

The people were, for the most part, receptive to the Kingdom message when the missionaries called at their doors. No slamming of doors in their face; no short, curt answers; instead, at nearly every home they were invited in. Before they could present the Kingdom message, however, certain questions often had to be answered in order to satisfy the household's curiosity. "Where are you from?" "Are you married?" "Do you have any children?" Finally a witness could be given. Frequently the conversation would terminate with coffee or even an offer to share a meal.

The missionaries knew very little Spanish. Fortunately, at that time the portable phonograph was being used in the field service. So, after greeting the householder, an invitation was extended to listen to a brief recorded message. At least one of the missionaries had a problem, however. After he set up the phonograph and offered to play a recording about the Bible, the householder usually replied, "*¡Como no!*" Hearing the word "*no*" and not being able to converse further in Spanish, the missionary would close up his phonograph and go to the next door. It took a little while before he found out that "*¡Como no!*" really means "Why not!" and that householders were actually inviting him to proceed. But the people in general were kind, and if they could, they would help the missionaries to find the right words.

Much literature was placed, especially in business places. However, the missionaries wanted to "teach." As their grasp of the language grew, they put forth an effort to make return visits and start Bible studies, using the book *Children*. Then one day they were overjoyed when they came upon José Sosa, who had studied with Ambrosio Rosa in Arecibo but then had lost contact with the brothers after moving to San Juan. He immediately began to accompany the missionaries in field service and was a great help to them with their Spanish.

MORE MISSIONARIES ARRIVE

At that time there were over two million people on the island; it was evident that more workers were needed. How happy the brothers were, then, when additional missionaries arrived! Over the years, more than 100 missionaries have served here, as many as

60 at the same time. These have been willing workers, eager to share in whatever way they could to spread the Kingdom message. They have helped to open up the work in most of the principal cities and in numerous smaller towns.

Their interest, however, was not only in sowing new seed but also in cultivating what had already been sown. (Compare 1 Corinthians 3:6-9; Acts 15:36.) So some of those from San Juan decided to visit their brothers in Arecibo to encourage them in the faith. Since a need for mature help with meetings and field service arrangements was evident, arrangements were made for Emil Van Daalen and his cousin Donald to assist the small group in Arecibo. In time they were joined by Arthur, another one of the Van Daalens.

Back in San Juan the number of Witnesses was beginning to grow. Some who truly proved to be faithful brothers were coming along in the truth. Miguel Bari was one. In the old city of San Juan where his tiny room was located, people lived, as it were, in the passageways of buildings. As others walked into buildings they could see the cooking stoves, tables, and other furniture there in the passageways, with maybe one very small room for sleeping. Amid such surroundings Brother Bari did his work as a tailor. He had little in the way of material possessions, but he did have the qualities that motivated him to share faithfully in preaching God's Word right up till his death.

José Feliciano was another one of the early Witnesses who served faithfully until death. Ángel Figueroa, who at that time sold oranges on the street, also became our brother. From all walks of life

honesthearted ones were becoming "men of goodwill."

OUR FIRST CONVENTION

Assemblies play an important role in the lives of Jehovah's people. And in 1945 the time came to hold the first convention of worshipers of the true God in Puerto Rico. This was to be at the same time that conventions were held in 300 cities throughout the United States. A small union hall was obtained in Old San Juan near the entrance to the Fortaleza (the governor's mansion). All the talks had to be prepared by the missionaries with their very limited Spanish. Attendance, of course, was small for the regular sessions.

The public talk "The Meek Shall Inherit the Earth" was scheduled to be given on Sunday at 3:00 p.m. at the Assembly Hall of the Tropical School of Medicine just east of the capitol building. To publicize it, 10,000 handbills were distributed on the streets; announcements were made on the radio and in newspapers. A large cloth banner was strung across Ponce de León Avenue. At the beginning of the talk it was somewhat disappointing to see only some 20 persons present, mainly the brothers. But by the end of the program, there were 250 in the audience.

ENCOURAGING VISIT BY BROTHERS KNORR AND FRANZ

At the time that more missionaries arrived in Puerto Rico, in March 1946, the Watch Tower Society's president, N. H. Knorr, and the then vice president, F. W. Franz, also came on their tour of Caribbean lands. What a happy time this was!

Arrangements were made for a two-day assembly in the Ateneo Puertorriqueño at the entrance to the old city of San Juan. The public lecture, on the subject "Be Glad, Ye Nations," was delivered by Brother Knorr, with F. W. Franz as translator. It had been advertised with 65,000 handbills distributed from house to house and on the streets throughout the city. People from all walks of life were present. Brothers from Arecibo were also on hand. In all, the attendance was 260. What a time of rejoicing this was for the 35 Kingdom publishers then active in Puerto Rico! They could see that the truth was now getting well established here.

During their visit, Brothers Knorr and Franz met with the missionaries to outline plans for future expansion. To enable the missionaries to devote their full attention to the Kingdom work, a missionary home arrangement was being instituted, in which the Society would set up the home and provide food and lodging for the missionaries, most of whom had left behind home and relatives to serve in a foreign land. How greatly those zealous workers appreciated that loving provision! Also, Brother Knorr announced that a branch office of the Watch Tower Society was to be established in Puerto Rico on April 1, 1946. The two-story building that was thereafter obtained at Calle Lafayette 704, Santurce, served as the center of theocratic activity in Puerto Rico for the next 20 years.

PUBLIC MEETINGS SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS

One of the methods used to good effect to spread the Kingdom message was public meetings. These

were really public, held for the most part in public parks and plazas. Since the climate in Puerto Rico is warm all year around, they could be held almost every week. Nevertheless, it required great faith and a willing spirit to go ahead with arrangements for such meetings. Why?

Consider four talks scheduled to be held in the Barrio Obrero Plaza in Santurce in July of 1946. Who were the speakers? Well, the native brothers were all too new in the truth, so the missionaries had to do the best they could with their limited Spanish. Many of them read manuscripts prepared by copying paragraphs from various publications and then putting them in a sequence appropriate to the subject. On one occasion, after a missionary had read his talk, an interested person approached him to ask a question. But the missionary could not understand a thing the man said and had to refer him to someone who could speak Spanish. However, with the help of holy spirit these willing brothers were having a share in preaching the good news.

Various parks and plazas, including the main plaza across from the City Hall in San Juan, were used for these talks. As might be expected, the religious leaders did not like this as much as the people in general did. Pressure was put on the mayor to deny this freedom of expression to Jehovah's Witnesses. Announcement was made in the public press that the public park should not be used for a "church service." The brothers went to a friendly lawyer about this, and he advised them to wait awhile and then ask for permission again. This was done, with good results. Evidently the mayor realized that she could not legally deny this right.

The brothers from San Juan also scheduled discourses in the plazas of nearby towns. One evening when the Witnesses had just finished their lecture in Juncos, a Pentecostal preacher wanted to ask some questions over the sound system. When his petition was denied, he began to shout in a loud voice, contradicting what the speaker had said. Although pointed answers from the Bible showed that he had the wrong viewpoint, he refused defeat. A large crowd gathered to listen to the discussion. After about an hour, they got tired of his arrogance and told him to keep quiet. He hotly denounced them as "sinners." At that, one of the men in the crowd called for a show of hands as to how many favored the "*americano*" in the argument. All but four or five of the hundred or more present raised their hands.

In Bayamón, a suburb to the west of San Juan, the mayor refused permission to have discourses in the public plaza, saying that the crowd would damage the plants around the park. However, when the brothers found out that another organization was using the park, they decided to go ahead with their series of talks. As handbills advertising the first talk were being distributed on the streets, the mayor came by and was also invited. Soon thereafter, the missionary was called to the police station. There the mayor insisted that the talk would not be given. But when he left, the police chief told the brothers to go ahead and he would provide police protection. When the sound equipment was being set up, the mayor demanded that a policeman arrest the speaker, but the policeman refused, stating that the Witnesses had every right to hold their talks. The following week the brothers found that the electricity for the sound sys-

tem had been cut off. However, they had an emergency generator, and the talk was given without mishap.

Many who today are Jehovah's Witnesses had their first contact with the truth by means of such open-air Bible lectures.

NATIVE PIONEERS EXPAND THE WITNESS

The zealous example set by the missionaries was an encouragement to native Witnesses to take up the full-time service. One of the first to become a pioneer was Theódulo Otero (usually called Teo), a brother in his late 20's. He had learned the truth by reading the book *Children* and with the help of a Bible study conducted in a home across the street from where he lived and worked. He quickly grasped the Bible's teachings, was baptized at the first assembly held in Puerto Rico in 1945, and was one of the happy delegates to the international assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1946. Later that same year he was appointed a "general" pioneer. Since he did not have family responsibilities that might limit where he could serve, he was assigned to Cayey, situated in a verdant valley high in the mountains south of San Juan. About ten years earlier, Ramón López Núñez, a barber in Cayey, had obtained some literature from Marie Hawkins and later had severed his ties with false religion. When he came down the mountain to attend a convention in San Juan in 1946, the brothers were overjoyed to learn that there was such a person in Cayey. So Theódulo Otero was sent to help him. Together they worked from house to house, and soon another congregation was formed.

Meanwhile, in Arecibo, Santiago Rodríguez, Sr.,

PUERTO RICO AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS



had become a pioneer. He had his wife and ten children to care for, so pioneering called for careful planning. However, his small pension helped him to make ends meet financially. Not content with preaching only in Arecibo, he reached out, like the apostle Paul, to other fields. This tall, energetic brother was seen preaching in Barceloneta, Manatí, Hatillo, Camuy, Quebradillas, Lares, and Utuado. To reach these places he traveled 15 to 20 miles (24 to 32 km) along winding mountain roads.

Brother Rodríguez was 52 years of age when he enrolled as a regular pioneer, and he remained in that full-time service till shortly before his death in 1977 at the age of 83. Residents of the area became accustomed to seeing him hurry along the road as he went from house to house. To work in the field service with Chago, as he was called, was an inspiring experience. A person almost had to trot to keep up with him. His gestures and facial expressions gave evidence that he was putting his whole soul into his work. He had no fear of man and would preach to anyone in any place.

**Theophilus and
Doris Klein,
zealous
missionaries
serving here
since 1947**



KINGDOM TRUTH REACHES THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

Directly east of Puerto Rico lie the Virgin Islands. St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix were purchased from Denmark by the United States in 1917. In times past there was considerable agriculture there, and slave labor was usually used to work the fields. The countryside is still dotted with the ruins of old estates, with a great house in the middle surrounded by adobe huts that were used to house the slaves. Locations are still designated by the names of these estates, such as Estate Carlton or Estate Richmond. But the sugar industry has moved out; the sugar mill is no longer operating. Tourism has become one of the principal sources of income.

It was to these islands that the Society assigned Brother and Sister Theophilus Klein, a missionary couple, to open up the Kingdom-preaching work in January 1947. The reception was amazing. During the first four months, they obtained 750 new subscriptions for the Society's magazines. Local residents quickly began to share in the preaching work.

In fact, in the first eight months, 29 publishers joined in preaching the good news, not only from house to house but also on the streets with the magazines. On Saturday morning the main street in St. Thomas was often filled with publishers presenting *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*

A former staff writer for *Life* magazine described her impression in this way: "Among the sights which struck us when we first walked through the streets of St. Thomas was the number of men and women standing on street corners wearing canvas bags on which was written *THE WATCHTOWER* . . . The most vocal of them, a well-dressed, prosperous-looking man in his middle forties, had called on me on board [the boat] the *Love Junk* once, asking for a few minutes in which to talk. But I was fully occupied with some food on the fire at the time and sent him away; therefore I did not know anything about the Watchtower.

"It was with some surprise that I recognized this gentleman, immaculate as usual in a white suit, stiff-collared shirt and tie, crouched over the engine with Harry. . . . As time went on, and the man did not leave, I began to wonder what was happening to my good Presbyterian husband. If he was being converted, I wondered to what. Perhaps all this was leading up to baptism by immersion; we certainly were in the ideal spot for it. . . . But far from the fire and brimstone oratory I had expected, the words coming out of the Watchtower man were so softly spoken that I could not make out what he was saying. His actions were even less revealing. . . . 'What's he doing in there, John-Thomas?' I asked . . . 'Is he

converting Mr. Harman?' . . . 'I doesn't think so. . . . The Watchtower man hold de wrench for de Chief.' . . . I saw it all clearly. The Watchtower man was not only a missionary, but an expert psychologist as well. At that particular time, there was no more direct way to Harry's soul than through his engine.

"Finally the Watchtower man emerged. . . . I could not wait to go into the engine room and talk to Harry. 'Nice fellow,' he commented. 'Offered to come and discuss the Bible with me once a week.' 'Who is he?' I asked. 'He's a Jehovah's Witness,' Harry said. 'Certainly do admire his dedication. . . . I had to do something for him in return; he won't take contributions.' 'What, Harry,' I asked, 'did you say you would do for him?' 'Oh I took a year's subscription to *Awake!*'"

FREED FROM BONDAGE TO A BAD HABIT

A group of the missionaries who arrived late in 1946 were assigned to Puerto Rico's then second-largest city, Ponce, on the south coast. The territory was fruitful, and in less than a year a congregation was formed there.

One who began to study there in 1948 was a silver-haired lady named Susana Mangual. After a few months of study, she learned that an assembly was going to be held in San Juan. Though she had always stayed at home before she began to study the truth, she decided to attend. She also wanted to get baptized, but she had a serious problem. She was a heavy smoker, and she knew that she would have to quit that unclean habit first. (2 Cor. 7:1) Could she break free from its bondage? En route to the assem-

bly she made a firm decision, and relying on Jehovah for help, she held to it. Because of her smoking, she had always had a bad cough. Now her health greatly improved. She became a regular pioneer and continued in that service till the age of 86.

Susana preached everywhere and anywhere. She never did get accustomed to territory assignments and maps, but one would see that dear silver-haired lady telling out the good news wherever her heart willed her to be. Not only was she a familiar figure in Ponce but she also commuted to other towns to preach. In two of them, Guayanilla and Peñueles, there are now thriving congregations.

MILITARY MEN LEARN THE TRUTH

The message of the Kingdom was reaching out to the hearts of all sorts of men. Miguel Quirós, a soldier stationed at the army camp in Cayey in 1947, had obtained a copy of *Awake!* magazine and then sent to the Society for more information. He received the book "*The Truth Shall Make You Free*" and showed it to a fellow soldier, Pedro Hernández. Realizing that this was the truth, they shared it with Samuel Delucca, who was also a soldier, and the three studied together.

Before long, they found out that there was a barber in Cayey who was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. So they got in contact with Ramón López and, through him, with Teo Otero, who was pioneering in the area. They immediately began to attend meetings, and dressed in civilian clothes, they went from house to house preaching the Kingdom message.

Soon, however, they realized that if they were going to live in harmony with God's Word, they must

make themselves "no part of the world" in the complete sense. (John 17:16; Mic. 4:1-3) Because they refused to participate in certain activities in the army, they were sentenced to six months in prison. They were confined in a military prison in Fort Buchanan near San Juan. Did this change their minds as to serving Jehovah? Not at all. They continued to study the Bible in prison. Eleven other prisoners also became interested, and they had a fine study together—that is, until the army chaplain heard about it.

One day an army colonel came to the prison and, of course, the prisoners saluted him—except for these three brothers. He became furious and entered the office to speak to the one in charge of the prison. "Well, what do you want me to do?" asked the warden. "These men are already in jail for refusing to salute officers on the outside. Do you want me to dig a hole deep down under the prison in order to put them deeper down into prison?"

After serving their sentences, the brothers were discharged from the army, and each went to his own hometown to take up the preaching work.

BRINGING THE TRUTH HOME TO ST. JOHN

Edmead George was also serving in the army when he came in contact with Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States. His appetite stimulated, he got in touch with the branch office of the Society when he was transferred to Puerto Rico. Regular Bible studies strengthened his faith.

Upon release from military service, he returned to his home on St. John, in the Virgin Islands, bringing along a love for Bible truth. There he lived in a tiny

village known as East End—a fitting name because that is where the village was located on the island. Eagerly he shared with friends and neighbors the good things he had learned. His preaching was reinforced in 1949 when the Society's schooner *Sibia* visited St. John with four missionaries aboard. The crew consisted of Gust Maki, Arthur Worsley, Stanley Carter, and Ronald Parkin, who were assigned to spread the Kingdom message in the Lesser Antilles. What a hearty welcome they received when they put into port at East End! During their stay, the 1,000 inhabitants of St. John were given a thorough witness.

PROTESTANT CLERGY STIR UP OPPOSITION

During 1949 four missionaries were assigned to Mayagüez, known as *Sultana del Oeste* (Sultana of the West). It was not long until they were holding meetings in the front room of the small missionary home, and by the following year, a congregation was formed.

This activity did not go unnoticed by the clergy. Peggy Maykut (now Sister Arthur Van Daalen) started a study with Lolita Merle, who was viewed as a pillar in the Presbyterian Church. She showed so much interest that she went with the missionaries from Mayagüez to attend an assembly in St. Thomas. On returning home, she began to feel the heat of persecution. The minister visited her to dissuade her from association with the Witnesses. After a lengthy discussion, she arranged for the minister to come to her home to discuss the Trinity doctrine with the missionary who was conducting studies with her. He never came. Instead, she received a letter advising

her to appear before the church committee. Her reply was a letter of resignation. She is still an active servant of Jehovah, though now physically blind and over 90 years old.

After Sister Merle's departure from the Presbyterian Church, considerable opposition came from that religious body. The Protestant churches had by agreement divided up the island among themselves. So the ministers accused the Witnesses of invading their pastures and taking away their "sheep." "Why don't you go to the 'unbelievers,' those who do not have any religion?" they demanded. In their concern about safeguarding what they viewed as their private domain, they ignored the fact that those who truly are "sheep" belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, not to one or another of the religious denominations in Christendom.—Matt. 25:31-33; John 10:16.

In spite of such opposition, the Mayagüez Congregation continued to grow. By 1955 the missionaries were moved to other assignments, and the local publishers branched out to witness to other towns in the area. Today there are eight congregations in Mayagüez itself, with many more in nearby communities.

EX-BOXER BECOMES ZEALOUS FIGHTER FOR THE FAITH

By 1950 the Ponce Congregation was up to some 70 publishers. The missionaries there had moved the missionary home and also the Kingdom Hall to the third floor of a building in the heart of the city.

During this year Francisco Torruellas (known as Paco) and his wife Leonor began to study the Bible with Lillian Kammerud. Paco had been a profession-

al boxer and baseball player and was currently engaged in the auto-repair business. The whole family took part in the study. At first his progress was slow, but they decided to attend the last day of a small circuit assembly in Mayagüez in April 1950. He was very much impressed with the assembly and the association, even offering his car to transport baptismal candidates to the immersion site at the beach.

After this assembly, he was fired with zeal for Jehovah's service, going out alone when the brothers did not come for him. He witnessed to his friends, his neighbors, and his employees, and he conducted many studies with these people. The combined attendance at three of his studies was 35 persons, and of these, 14 began to declare the good news. By July he wanted to be baptized, not being willing to wait for the district convention in October. So a special baptism was arranged for ten persons, most of whom were his own family and those with whom he was conducting studies. He proved to be zealous for the truth, serving as "congregation servant," city overseer for Ponce, and assembly overseer for the circuit. Since his retirement from his secular work, he is also a regular pioneer.

WILLING TO DO WHAT THEY COULD

One town that did not have a missionary home was Jayuya, a small community high in the mountains in the center of the island. However, the truth reached this remote place too. How? By means of Aurea Cortés, who had learned the truth in the Dominican Republic. On returning to her hometown, Jayuya, she did what she could to share Bible truth with others. She talked to her friends and relatives who

lived in the country not far from town. Among these was the large Pierluissi family. Those who were most interested were among the children. Soon meetings were organized in the home, with one of the sons, Joaquín, conducting. He and his cousin Ángel began to share in the field service.

Other towns were also receiving a witness as publishers moved out into new areas. Two of the first Witnesses in Arecibo, Alfonso López and his wife, were among these. They moved to Las Marías, a small town in the mountains east of Mayagüez. Their home was about two miles (3 km) out of town and about a half mile (1 km) off the highway along what was sometimes a very muddy road. The only means of transportation was on foot or by public cars. They were an elderly couple but did what they could to spread the good news. Much seed was sown and some later bore fruit. In time, special pioneers were assigned there, and now there is a congregation of some 50 publishers. Among them is a former leader in the Evangelical Church, Jaime Custodio, as well as the former mayor and his family, to all of whom Brother López witnessed. Sister López, now well up in years, is still doing what she can in Jehovah's service.

WHERE PROGRESS WAS SLOW AT FIRST

When missionaries were assigned to Caguas in 1949, they worked diligently and soon were holding meetings in the front room of their missionary home. However, progress was slow at first. The hearts of many of the early ones who associated did not prove to be the right kind of soil, so after a time they ceased serving Jehovah. However, other seed took root and produced manyfold.

For example, when Dolores Vázquez was introduced to the truth, she and her oldest daughter, Carmen, studied regularly. At times her three oldest sons also sat in on the study. Dolores progressed well and was soon attending meetings. She wanted Jehovah's approval not only for herself but also for her whole family. Over the years, nearly all her sons and daughters as well as their families have embraced the privilege of serving the only true God. There are well over 30 persons among her sons, daughters, and grandchildren who are dedicated servants of Jehovah or are having a share in preaching the good news. Two of her sons and one of her grandsons are now serving as elders.

Missionaries continued to work in Caguas for many years, and with much patience the congregation began to grow. Now there are 13 congregations in Caguas, and others have sprung up in neighboring towns.

To the west of San Juan, in Bayamón, a number of years passed before expansion could really be felt. Oh, yes, nine publishers reported during the first year of missionary activity in that area known for its cattle ranches. In four years, the total had risen to 66. But the next year it was down to 31. Then the city began to grow as new housing developments opened up. Many who moved into these were away from their relatives, so those who listened appreciatively to the Kingdom message were not as inclined to be as concerned about whether others would approve. That town of 15,000 has now mushroomed into a city with a population of some 200,000. Today

Bayamón has 21 congregations and there are many more in surrounding towns.

REACHING INTO A STRONGHOLD OF SPIRITISM

La Ciudad de los Brujos (The City of Witches) also has been given opportunity to hear the Kingdom message. There in Guayama, on the south coast, spiritism has a strong grip on the people. Some prominent businessmen and civic leaders are spiritists.

George Snodgrass, a missionary, became acquainted with the president of the spiritist movement there and was invited to present the Bible's view of spiritism to their members in the spiritist temple. Because George had only limited knowledge of Spanish, he invited Ivan Truman, a missionary serving in Caguas, to give the discourse. At one point during the program one of the members became very excited, began to interrupt the speaker, and objected strongly to the statements made. However, he was calmed down by the one in charge, and Brother Truman was allowed to finish his talk. A good witness was given.

Slowly the congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Guayama began to grow. An elderly brother, Pablo Bruzaud, who had learned the truth in the Dominican Republic, returned to his hometown and pioneered there for many years till his death. Sometime later, Randy Morales, who had learned the truth in New York, also returned to Guayama and became a pioneer. Later he attended Gilead School, and now he serves as a member of the Branch Committee in Puerto Rico.

RADIO HELPS TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS

The radio has been used extensively in Puerto Rico to preach the Kingdom message. Often, public talks given at assemblies were broadcast, so the entire island could hear the Bible's message if they wanted to do so.

At one time there were as many as 16 radio stations broadcasting the Kingdom message. This has helped people, particularly in country areas, to learn the truth. When the Witnesses began to penetrate into isolated areas, the people were receptive because they had heard the message on the radio. However, because of increased operational costs, nearly all the stations began to request paid programs, so we chose to use our resources to reach people on a more personal basis.

A TRAGIC ACCIDENT

Leo and Eunice Van Daalen, who were among the first missionaries in Puerto Rico, planned to make a trip to visit their relatives in the United States right after the Memorial in 1952. This would be the first trip for their son Mark, who was about two years old. However, almost as soon as the plane left the ground at Isla Grande Airport, it began to experience difficulties. Within minutes it crashed into the Atlantic Ocean about five miles (8 km) offshore. Both Leo and Eunice lost their lives. It was reported that Eunice went under after she gave her life belt to a woman who could not swim. Amazingly, their two-year-old son was picked up floating on the surface of the waves. He was later adopted by his aunt in the United States and is a faithful Witness to this day.

The Van Daalens were well known in Puerto Rico,

so local newspapers gave much publicity to what had happened to them. This opened the way to talk to many people about the Scriptural hope of the resurrection that the Van Daalens cherished.

FIERCE OPPOSITION IN COROZAL

In a number of places there was intense opposition to the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses, but it did not stop their work. Corozal, a town in the mountains southwest of San Juan, was such a place.

Before Rosaura Fuentes learned what the Bible says about the adoration of images, she had given permission to a Catholic group to bring an image of the Virgin to her home in connection with the worship of Mary. But upon learning how God views this practice, she wrote to the group to tell them not to bring the image. (1 Cor. 10:14) When this got to the ears of the priest, he immediately paid her a visit to dissuade her from further studying the Bible with the Witnesses. Then, to intimidate her, he put up a loudspeaker on a nearby house through which he spoke against the Witnesses and denounced this lady. Instead of capitulating, she continued to grow in knowledge of God. Shortly thereafter, Soledad González, a special pioneer, visited her to strengthen her and take her in the field service.

Then it was decided to hold a series of public Bible talks in the public plaza in Corozal, right next to the church. This really infuriated the priest. He came out of the church, approached the speaker, and shook his fist in the speaker's face. The next week the priest decided to put on his own lecture and, with his loudspeaker going full blast, began to denounce the brothers in an effort to drown out the one who was

then giving a public talk in the plaza. All of this only served to strengthen our new sister. Even though generally the people in this town were fearful, some began to listen; among them was a family from which two girls later went into the special pioneer service. Today, there is a Kingdom Hall in Corozal from which two congregations carry on their ministry.

PEOPLE COULD SEE THE DIFFERENCE

By 1952 there were 19 congregations on the island, and more were to come. In a sense, the island-wide elections for governor contributed to the expansion at that time. How was that? This was a fiery campaign in which the Roman Catholic Church openly participated, later even forming a separate party called the PAC (Christian Action Party). Two bishops came out in favor of one of the candidates and opposed the controlling Popular Democratic Party.

Many sincere Catholics strongly objected to this meddling of religion in politics and they supported the Popular Democratic Party, which won by a large majority. Because of what took place during that election campaign, quite a few sincere Catholics left the church. Some of these listened to the truth and became servants of Jehovah. They could see the difference between those who really are separate from the world, as Jesus said would be true of his followers, and those who are not. (John 17:16) Others who had previously been nasty to the Witnesses showed a more receptive attitude.

THE SIBIA REACHES TORTOLA

In September of 1952 the Puerto Rico branch began to oversee the Kingdom preaching in the British

Virgin Islands, which lie to the northeast of the U.S. Virgin Islands. About 30 islands and islets make up these British islands, but only the larger ones are inhabited: Tortola with a population of about 9,000; Virgin Gorda with about 1,000; Jost Van Dyke, Anegada, Peter, and Salt islands with a few hundred inhabitants. These form a British colony with a governor appointed by the Crown, but most of their commerce and communications are with the United States.

Some preaching work had been done on Tortola many years before the second world war. However, the British government put a ban on the Society's literature during the war. Later on, in 1949, the missionary schooner *Sibia* arrived at Road Town, Tortola. For about two months, the four brothers on this boat preached to the people. Leaving the boat early in the morning, they were often out preaching for up to ten hours before returning. In the evenings they would have public talks in town, sometimes every night. Usually these were out in the open, under a tree, with a gas lamp for illumination. Sometimes a bandstand was used. Hundreds would attend, and the question session that followed often lasted longer than the talk itself.

The *Sibia* made two more visits to Tortola, in 1950 and 1951. The clergy were, of course, angry and tried to stir up arguments. In fact, a Seventh-Day Adventist preacher got so infuriated when Brother Parkin would not argue with him that he literally jumped on Brother Parkin's back and tried to drag him back by force to continue the discussion. Our brothers wisely avoided such debates.

MISSIONARY HELP FROM THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

When severe persecution caused first-century Christians in Jerusalem to be dispersed to other areas, this resulted in a spreading of the good news. (Acts 8:1, 4) In a similar way, when the Dominican Republic banned the work of Jehovah's Witnesses and deported the missionaries, this contributed to expansion in the Puerto Rican field.

On August 3, 1957, ten of these missionaries arrived at Isla Verde Airport in San Juan. There were four married couples—Lennart and Virginia Johnson, Raymond and Rhudelle Johnson, George and Nellie Droge, Roy and Juanita Brandt—and two single sisters—Kathryn Glass and Dorothy Lawrence. These were quickly assigned to various towns in the island, and new missionary homes were opened.

One of these missionaries, Raymond Johnson, was in his new assignment in Caguas only a short time. He was making the last house-to-house call one morning with his wife and had just placed a "*Let God Be True*" book when he sat down in a chair and died of a heart attack. At his funeral 192 were present and a good witness was given, even as he had given a faithful witness during his lifetime.

OFF TO THE "DIVINE WILL" INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The year 1958 saw much activity in Puerto Rico. The brothers were especially happy that three pioneers from Puerto Rico were having the opportunity to attend the Gilead missionary school. These were in the class that graduated during the "Divine

*Ronald Parkin,
coordinator of
the Branch
Committee in
Puerto Rico, with
his wife Maxine*



Will" International Assembly at Yankee Stadium, New York. But they were not the only ones present from this part of the world.

About 400 brothers and sisters from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands made the trip to New York to attend this historic assembly. These comprised approximately one fifth of all the publishers here at that time. Several chartered planes were needed to provide transport. When this group returned, they were filled with enthusiasm and were eager to do their part in the preaching work.

Puerto Rico had its own "Divine Will" Assembly in Caguas in September, a six-day assembly with essentially the same program that was presented in New York. Then all the publishers were very busy distributing the special resolution that was adopted at the assembly. That resolution contained a concise statement of truths that people everywhere need to know. In all, about 200,000 copies were distributed throughout Puerto Rico.

ST. CROIX JOINS IN PRAISING JEHOVAH

The largest of the Virgin Islands is St. Croix, lying 40 miles (64 km) south of the main group. When

Puerto Rico

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Edwin Bobb and his wife went there to make known the Kingdom message, some responded appreciatively, and in 1949 the first congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses was formed there. Later, Ted Klein and his wife shared in building on that foundation. Other brothers from the United States came to share in the work. As a result, today there are four congregations there, two English and two Spanish, that unitedly praise Jehovah.

CHANGES IN A GROWING ORGANIZATION

The organization was on a firm footing here by the late 1950's. The missionaries were dearly loved and their work was much appreciated. But the time had come when many of them could beneficially be moved out of Puerto Rico to other fields. So some were reassigned to Argentina. Others went to the Dominican Republic, since the ban had been lifted and there was still much work to be done there.

Changes were also taking place in the branch organization. Donald Elder had been assisting the branch overseer, but in April 1960, because of his wife's poor health, they had to leave, and he was replaced by Ronald Parkin. When Brother Parkin attended the special ten-month Gilead course in 1962, Lennart Johnson was brought into the branch to assist Emil Van Daalen, who had been overseeing the work there for the past eight years. After Emil attended the special Gilead course in 1963, he was given another assignment, in the Bahamas, and Brother Parkin was entrusted with responsibility for the branch in Puerto Rico.

BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS BY COURT ORDER

Many of Jehovah's Witnesses in Puerto Rico have had their faith put to the test because they have heeded the Bible's command to 'abstain from blood.' (Acts 15:28, 29) Most have stood firm in their determination to obey Jehovah's command. A few have compromised. A great number have had blood forced on them by court order. How has this come about? The doctor or a relative would go to a judge and obtain an order from him to administer blood in spite of the objections of the patient or those responsible for him. This was done even though the patient had signed a statement requesting that no blood be used and relieving the hospital and doctors of responsibility for complications attributed to this refusal.

Such a situation confronted Ana Paz de Rosario. In 1961, during pregnancy, she was told by her doctor that an operation was necessary or both she and her baby would most likely die. She was taken to the hospital and was waiting for the operation when the doctor became furious because she refused a blood transfusion. A call was promptly made to the professional building to contact Dr. Basilio Dávila. He agreed to take the case. Even though her blood count was very low, the operation was successful. Later, however, the baby did die.

Our sister was at home when complications set in. She had to return to the hospital. Her cousin decided that she needed blood so, through a lawyer, he went to a judge. Without consulting the doctor in charge of the case, the judge issued a court order for a blood transfusion and even had a policeman sent to make sure the order was carried out. How-

ever, another court order was requested to counter the first judge's order, but that legal action was not necessary because, according to the doctor, blood was not needed. She recovered well.

Then, 15 years later, in 1976, she became ill and went to the hospital for an examination. It was found that she had developed gangrene in her colon and the infected section would have to be removed. The doctor agreed to operate without a blood transfusion. The surgery was performed and she was recovering, though still in critical condition.

But the same relative, who had obtained the court order 15 years before, learned of her sickness and immediately went to work as before, determined to force her to accept blood. Again, the judge was contacted, and a court order was issued without consulting the doctor. When the doctor stated that he had already performed the operation and there was no need for transfusion, an order was issued for his arrest. Although he explained why he had not administered blood, another court order was issued for the hospital to administer blood in spite of the patient's wishes. To carry out this order, five armed policemen were dispatched to the hospital. When Sister Rosario saw the men, she screamed: "Don't do this to me! I'm not a delinquent!" But she was quickly subdued. They tied her hands and feet to the bed and forced the transfusion on her, even cutting her neck to reach her jugular vein to force the blood into her, as they were unable to do so through her arm. At this she went into shock and never recovered consciousness.

Details of this dastardly act against freedom of

conscience and human dignity were published in *Awake!* magazine of May 22, 1977. Copies were presented personally to all the doctors, nurses, lawyers, and judges in Puerto Rico, and this edition was distributed extensively throughout the island.

There are a few doctors here who agree to operate without blood. The branch office has a list of these and refers the brothers to them if they ask for assistance in this regard. Nevertheless, cases are still reported, often in the public press, where blood transfusions are administered by court order over the objections of the patient. Many of these cases involve minors, who are viewed by many doctors and judges as having no authority over their own bodies, and a considerable number involve adults. In an endeavor to cope with this, a number of Witnesses make sworn affidavits before they enter the hospital, so that the hospital personnel will respect their wishes not to receive blood.

OBSTACLES THAT TURNED INTO BLESSINGS

There was much excitement in 1963 because many brothers were preparing to attend another international assembly at Yankee Stadium in New York. This time about 500 were able to enjoy this grand experience. Then, on October 3-6 the same information was presented at a convention in Ponce.

Actually, the assembly was to have been held a week earlier. But a powerful organization of coffee growers had asked for the baseball park in Ponce, and by mistake the same dates had been assigned to the Witnesses and to the Coffee Growers Association. The Park Authority asked the Witnesses to

reschedule their convention. Much work had to be done to make the change and advise the brothers. Interestingly, however, the very week of the coffee growers' convention a small hurricane passed close by Ponce and the roads became impassable. The following weekend the weather was just fine for our assembly.

Next we learned that the governor of Puerto Rico had scheduled a special ball game for Thursday night. Well, that, too, required extra work on our part. Our evening session was rescheduled for Friday morning. Following the afternoon session, the platform was removed and the brothers cleared the stadium. Then at about 6:00 p.m. a large truck ran into a light pole nearby, knocking out the transformer. There was no electricity in the ballpark Thursday evening, so there was no ball game, nor was there a lot of debris for us to clean up afterward.

SERVING WHERE THE NEED IS GREATER

By 1964 there were 60 congregations reporting in Puerto Rico. Many of these were formed as a result of the work of special pioneers. During the 1960's many native Puerto Ricans, both brothers and sisters, took up the special pioneer work. Having grown up among the people, they were more readily accepted in some communities than the missionaries were. These special pioneers were assigned to the smaller towns where missionaries had not been assigned, and in some cases they replaced missionaries who were being assigned elsewhere. Thus congregations sprang up in Isabela, Yauco, Arroyo, Ceiba, Dorado, Corozal, Naranjito, and many other towns.

To build up these new congregations and to organize others, publishers were encouraged to move from the larger cities to places where the need was greater. Among those who accepted the invitation were Brother and Sister Bonifacio Ríos, who moved from San Juan to Aguas Buenas in the mountains to the west of Caguas. Working together, they were able to develop a book study group; then arrangements were made for a regular *Watchtower* Study. Finally, in November 1963, a congregation was formed.

Sister Ríos was already a pioneer. In time Brother Ríos also enrolled, and the two became special pioneers on the island of Vieques off the southeast coast of Puerto Rico. Now they are in the circuit work.

Manfredo Vencebí was another who wanted to serve where his help was most needed. So he and his wife along with their young sons left New York, where they had learned the truth, and settled in Guayanilla. Although he had a family, he was able to serve as a special pioneer. After a congregation was established in Guayanilla, they moved on to Guánica to help strengthen the congregation in that locality. When increased family responsibilities made it necessary for Manfredo to give up the special pioneer service, he took up regular pioneer work with the Yauco Congregation. From there the family moved to Canóvanas to build up that congregation. Their three boys are grown up now. All of them have served at Brooklyn Bethel, and one is still there with his wife. As for Manfredo, that desire to serve where the need is greater remains strong.

Though still rearing a teenage daughter, he is a circuit overseer.

WHERE TO HOLD AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

As 1966 arrived, there was much excitement in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Why? Because Puerto Rico had been selected as the location for one in a series of international conventions that would be held in Central and South America, reaching here in January of 1967.

But what facilities would be suitable? Only two places afforded adequate room. One was the spacious new Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium. The other was a deteriorating stadium called Sixto Escobar. Arrangements were made to use the Hiram Bithorn stadium. All seemed to be going well until it was realized that the baseball finals would be played the very week of the convention. So efforts were then made to use the older stadium. When the Parks Administrator learned of this, he disapproved. He felt that it was not appropriate to invite people from all over the world to a stadium that was a dilapidated wreck.

Finally, it was decided to try once more to obtain the Sixto Escobar stadium, trusting in Jehovah. Prayer was offered up to Jehovah, and then Brother Parkin picked up the phone and called the head man in the Parks Authority. As the phone rang, this very man, Julio Monagas, was standing right by it. The secretary handed him the phone, and on hearing our final plea, he gave consent. What rejoicing there was in the branch office! But there was a big job ahead to clean the place up and

make it presentable for the brothers and sisters expected.

This convention proved to be the biggest till that time for Puerto Rico. Three thousand visitors came from the United States and a few from other Caribbean countries. Caring for them all was a big job. The entire program was presented in both English and Spanish. For the first time, Bible dramas were part of the program, and the same cast put on the dramas for both language groups. Everything went smoothly for the five days, and all were delighted with the combined attendance of 8,604 on the final day. These had come from 19 countries and islands of the sea.

EXPANSION REQUIRES NEW BRANCH FACILITIES

Conventions have been milestones in our theocratic history. And at the convention in 1968 we received a publication that has proved to be a powerful instrument in aiding honesthearted persons to make the truth their own. It is the study book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. This book, referred to by the brothers as "*la bomba azul*" (the blue bomb), came to be greatly feared by clergymen of Christendom. After its release, book placements soared in one year from 64,000 to 167,000, and home Bible studies rose to one per publisher. There is hardly a home in Puerto Rico that does not have this book.

So much literature was coming into Puerto Rico from the Society's factory in Brooklyn that there was just not enough room to store it till it could be moved out to the congregations. The garages to the

rear of the Bethel Home had been remodeled and converted into a stockroom, but now this was overflowing. Even the entranceway to the branch office was lined with cartons of books. So permission was received from the Society's headquarters to look for property to build a new branch office, Bethel Home, and Kingdom Hall.

The new building was put up in its entirety by brothers. Certain ones worked every day; then at night and on weekends hundreds of volunteers came. Some 16 congregations took turns in preparing the midday meal for the work force. On April 29, 1969, after seven months of hard work, the branch office moved into its spacious new facilities. A few days later, Brother Knorr was present to share in the dedication program.

KINGDOM HALLS IN WHICH TO MEET

With congregations growing rapidly and new ones being formed, there was an ever-increasing need for adequate meeting places. At first the congregations met in private homes. As the congregations grew, halls were rented. Some of them were in very bad condition and in need of much work to make them presentable. In Mayagüez a large hall was rented above a shoe store called *La Gloria*, so their place of meeting came to be known as *Los altos de la Gloria* (The High Place of Glory).

Then congregations began to build their own Kingdom Halls. Probably the first hall in Puerto Rico built by the brothers was the one in Saint Just, a rural congregation near the town of Carolina. Since then, other congregations have either built their own halls or remodeled houses or other

existing buildings, converting them into comfortable and attractive meeting places. About 140 Kingdom Halls have been built to date by the brothers in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Recently, two Kingdom Halls were built at right angles to each other on the same lot in Levittown; each is used by two congregations. And in Ponce a large two-story building was remodeled, with one Kingdom Hall on each floor, to accommodate another four congregations. Now, in Bayamón a complex of three Kingdom Halls has been built on one large lot to care for the needs of the Witnesses in that area.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN 1973

In 1973 a contract was made for the use of the Hiram Bithorn Municipal Stadium for an international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses. Most of the visitors came from the United States in 13 large jets, chartered flights of Pan American airways. Others came from various Caribbean islands. Transporting the brothers from the airport to their hotels and to and from the convention each day was a tremendous job. Also, special tours were organized so the visiting brothers could see some of the interesting things in San Juan and the countryside. One of the tours took the brothers to the famous mountain El Yunque, which has a rainfall of about 200 inches (510 cm) a year and luxuriant vegetation found nowhere else in the world.

As far as could be determined, there were over 7,000 visitors. In addition to the regular program, special English sessions were held in which brothers from the various Caribbean countries that were represented, as well as from Puerto Rico, put on inter-

esting programs to acquaint the visiting brothers with what had been done to further the Kingdom-preaching activity in their respective lands.

Despite heavy rain on the final day, this proved to be the biggest convention ever held in Puerto Rico till that time. A torrential downpour even enhanced the realism of the drama about the days of Noah. The seating capacity of the stadium is about 15,000, but a total of 30,840 packed the stadium and the area used for the English sessions. More recently, in 1983, even without the large international delegations, it was necessary to use three stadiums simultaneously to accommodate the large crowds that flock to these gatherings of Jehovah's people!

PHENOMENAL INCREASE IN PUBLISHERS

The 1970's showed a tremendous increase in the number of Kingdom publishers. The 1970 service year began with 5,530 publishers. By March 1971 there were 8,000 publishers. At the time of the 1973 international convention, this figure was 11,206. New congregations were being formed every month. In June 1977 the number of publishers peaked at 16,761, and then came some decrease.

Apparently a number of publishers were serving Jehovah, not with eternity in view, but having in mind the year 1975. When their expectations regarding that year did not materialize, they cooled off in their love for Jehovah and abandoned his organization. The number of publishers fell to 14,775 in August 1978, a drop of almost 2,000 in one year. For three years the decrease continued. New ones were coming in, but more were going out. Besides, because of the difficult economic situation in

Puerto Rico, many were moving to the United States. At last, in January 1982 a new peak in publishers was reached once more.

Since then the Kingdom work has taken on renewed momentum. Publishers now number upwards of 21,700. And the intensity of the witness has increased as the number of pioneers has gone up. Since 1982 the total regular pioneers has more than doubled. Including the auxiliary pioneers, in Puerto Rico we average 1,535 in full-time service each month. In the Virgin Islands, too, nearly 10 percent of the publishers are in the pioneer service, and the zealous band of Kingdom proclaimers in those islands devoted upwards of 110,000 hours last year to making public proclamation of their confidence that God's Kingdom is the only hope for humankind.

THE NEED FOR SUITABLE ASSEMBLY HALLS

For many years circuit assemblies have been a regular feature of Kingdom activity. In the early days small halls were obtained for this purpose. As our numbers increased and the congregations became larger, small baseball parks were used. These are found in nearly every town in Puerto Rico. They may be used free of charge, but an enormous amount of work had to be done to make them presentable for an assembly. Often chairs had to be rented and trucked to the site to provide additional seating. Cafeteria facilities had to be installed. The brothers worked hard for several days prior to a circuit assembly. Sometimes large halls were rented, but usually these were just a shell; everything had to be brought



Assembly Hall in a rural area of Caguas

in. One time, an assembly was held in a town plaza, with the City Hall on one side and the Catholic church on the other. Rainy weather often disrupted our assemblies.

As time went on, it was getting increasingly difficult to obtain even these facilities. Frequently, when baseball parks were secured, the arrangements were later canceled to give priority to a sports event. So the brothers began to think seriously about building their own Assembly Halls.

On the south coast, between Ponce and Mayagüez, land was purchased. For several years while the brothers were raising needed funds and building the hall, they met under a metal roof at the building site, much as they had done in baseball parks. But here they did not have to set it all up and tear it down again for each assembly. Now they have a very fine Assembly Hall that accommodates over a thousand people.

East of Arecibo the brothers leased some land

where they put up temporary assembly facilities until they could build. However, the land did not prove to be suitable for a permanent assembly site, so other property was sought. Finally, in 1976 land was purchased in a rural area of Caguas, right next to a highway that was being built to link Ponce with San Juan. In due time, a comfortable Assembly Hall seating 1,500 people was erected here.

These two Assembly Halls now provide facilities for all the circuit assemblies in Puerto Rico. Attendances are unusually high, averaging over 160 percent of the total publishers.

LOOKING AHEAD

Congregations are growing fast. Kingdom Halls are packed and overflowing. New congregations are being formed. New halls are being built and dedicated. In 1986, there were 57,328 present for the commemoration of the Lord's Evening Meal.

There is now a ratio of one publisher to every 164 persons. Every nook and corner in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands is receiving a witness regularly. Some territories are worked every week or so. There is no unassigned territory. How many more will respond favorably to the Kingdom message we do not know, but the door is still open and the local organization of Jehovah's people is geared for increase.

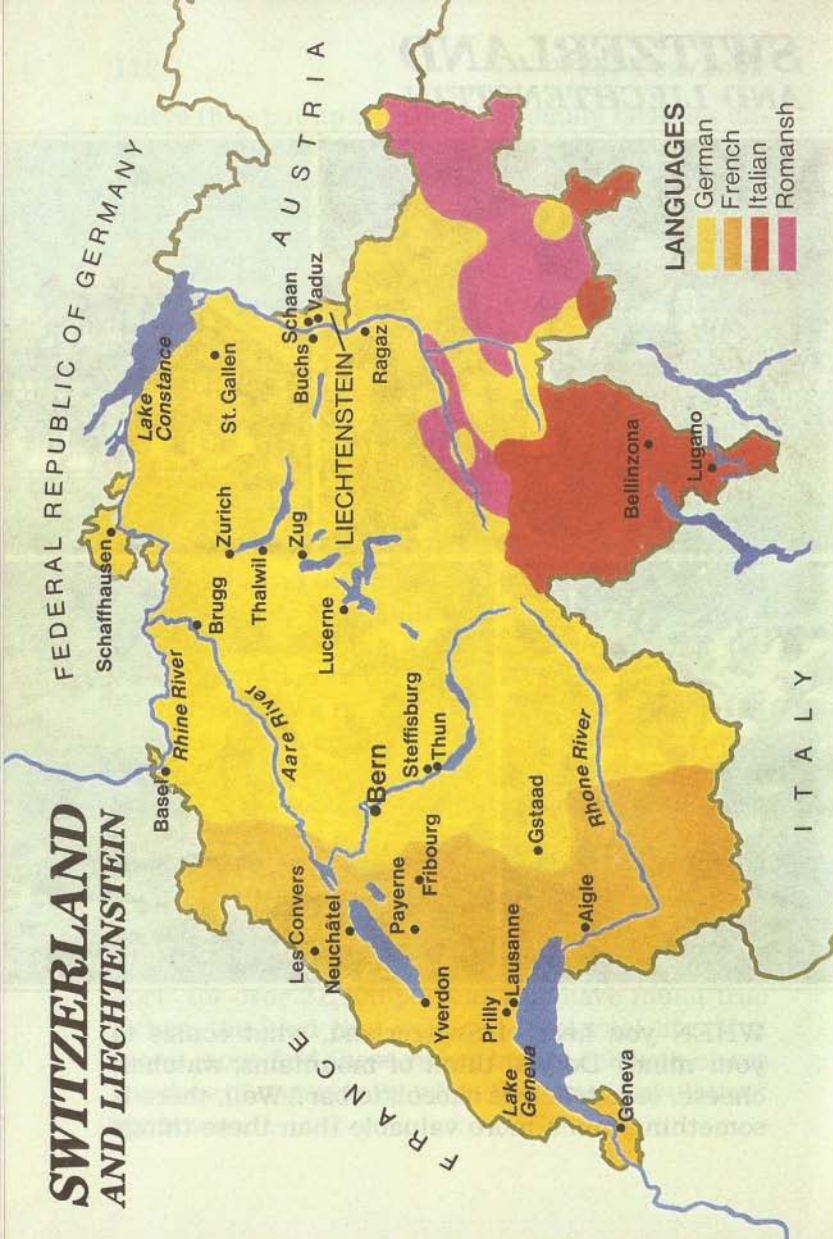
Certainly Puerto Rico has proved to be a "rich port" for over 21,700 persons who have found true riches, the kind that will lead to eternal life. May many more find these riches before Jehovah closes the door of opportunity when the "great tribulation" strikes.

SWITZERLAND AND LIECHTENSTEIN



WHEN you hear of Switzerland, what comes to your mind? Do you think of mountains, watches, cheese, or a delicious chocolate bar? Well, there is something much more valuable than these things

SWITZERLAND AND LIECHTENSTEIN



Switzerland

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in Switzerland. But first, let us tell you about the country itself.

During the century before Jesus Christ carried on his public ministry in Israel, Celtic people called the Helvetii had endeavored to move from central Europe into milder regions to the south. But the Roman army under Julius Caesar barred the way. In 58 B.C.E., after a battle that resulted in extensive slaughter, the surviving Helvetii were forced to return and settle again in the lowlands between the river Rhine and Lake Lemman. In the course of many centuries, a confederacy developed here that came to be called *Confederatio Helvetica*, or simply *Helvetia*. Undoubtedly, this country is known to you by its modern name, Switzerland.

Switzerland is a small country in the heart of Europe—only 15,943 square miles (41,293 sq km). To the north lies Germany; to the west is France; to the south there is Italy; and Austria and Liechtenstein are to the east. Though the area is small, few lands offer so much variety in scenery within such a space. Lofty snowcapped mountains are part of the landscape; so are palm-lined avenues in the south. The nearly 6.5 million inhabitants belong to one of the four groups of culture and language: German, French, Italian, and Romansh. Those speaking Romansh usually also know German or Italian. Additionally, there are many foreigners who have come for work or residence, and these speak a number of other languages.

RELIGIOUS SITUATION

Most residents of Switzerland belong to the Protestant or the Roman Catholic faith. Although

today members of both these confessions live side by side in the cities, there are still areas where one religion or the other predominates. For example, Geneva and Zurich are historically known as cities of the Protestant reformers Calvin and Zwingli. Bern, Basel, and Lausanne are also predominantly Protestant, whereas St. Gallen, Lucerne, and Lugano are mainly Catholic, and the ancient city of Fribourg is a fortress of the Roman church due to its Catholic university and numerous seminaries.

Often the border of a canton (that is, a state or province) is also a religious border, since the population of a given canton is either mostly Catholic or mostly Protestant. For example, speaking of central Switzerland, the Valais, or the Ticino immediately brings Catholicism to the Swiss mind. But persons originating in the cantons of Bern, Neuchâtel, or Zurich—to name just a few—are usually of Protestant faith.

Of course, there also exist other denominations, such as the Christ Catholics, the Jews, the Methodists, and many others. And certain villages actually include dozens of different religious groups.

Would the Kingdom message be welcomed by such a religiously inclined population? We shall see.

BIBLE TRUTH REACHES SWITZERLAND

In 1891, the Watch Tower Society's first president, Charles T. Russell, made a trip through various countries in Europe and the Middle East. He stopped at Bern, Switzerland, among other places. Explaining the purpose of this tour, he stated that he cared "nothing for curious and ancient ruins,

castles, etc.," but that he wanted "to see the people, to judge of their modes of living, habits of thought and tendencies." Later, in his report published in *Zion's Watch Tower*, November 1891, he mentioned that, as in other countries, he found the field in Switzerland "ready and waiting to be harvested."

For this reason he suggested to Adolf Weber that he go "into the Lord's vineyard" in Switzerland. Brother Weber was a Swiss citizen who had come to know the truth in the United States and worked part-time as gardener for Brother Russell. Unhesitatingly, Brother Weber accepted this mission. He was well qualified for it, since he spoke the three main Swiss languages. He settled in his birthplace, Les Convers, in the Jura mountains in January 1900.

Brother Weber earned his livelihood as a gardener and forester, but his prime interest was in sowing seeds of truth. Starting with the people with whom he worked, he enlarged his territory by walking to other villages and towns and by talking to people wherever he met them. During the winter, he used to go on foot into France and as far south as Italy in order to preach, returning to Les Convers in the springtime. Apart from the bare physical necessities of life, he loaded his knapsack with as much literature as he could possibly carry.

One day when he was crossing a bridge over the Hagneck Canal in the canton of Bern, Brother Weber met a man to whom he was able to witness. But as he lowered his knapsack, a book slipped out and fell into the shallow water at the edge of the

canal lock, right before the rakes. Later on, when the lockkeeper came to clean the rakes, he found the book, dried it, and started to read. It was a copy of Brother Russell's *Studies in the Scriptures*, Volume I. The lockkeeper and his wife marveled at what they were learning and they became convinced that they had found the truth.

INTEREST AROUSED BY ADVERTISEMENTS

Brother Weber left no stone unturned in order to get things started. In addition to his personal witnessing, he advertised *Studies in the Scriptures* by means of various newspapers, though this sort of publicity was usually rather costly. He arranged for some booksellers to include *Studies in the Scriptures* in their collections. Soon, people from various parts of the country wrote for the books. Those living in the same area were put in contact with one another, and it was suggested that they meet and study together. In those days there was not much in the way of entertainment, so acquaintances and friends readily attended such meetings when invited. Usually they arranged among themselves as to who should conduct the study, and often they took turns.

Tracts played an important role in those early beginnings. The few dedicated brothers mustered enough courage to distribute them in front of churches, or they mailed them by the thousands to householders in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. Brothers in the United States also helped in getting the work started here by mailing German issues of *Zion's Watch Tower* to friends and



**Adolf Weber,
who brought the
Kingdom
message back
to his homeland
in 1900**

relatives in Switzerland. Some of these later accepted the truth.—Eccl. 11:1.

THE PRESIDENT AT THE DOORSTEP

Among the first persons to receive the truth through Brother Weber was Mrs. Anna Bachmann in Basel. Although she had regularly attended the Evangelical Reformed Church, her interest in Bible study was aroused when Brother Weber talked to her about God's purpose for mankind and the fundamental truths of the Bible. She accepted the *Divine Plan of the Ages* and studied it all by herself, since there was no one around to help her. After a year Brother Weber returned, answered her questions in his calm way, and encouraged her to continue studying God's Word.

Then, in May 1903 she was surprised to find two visitors at her doorstep. One was a Bible Student from nearby Mülhausen (then a German city but now belonging to France), and the other was the president of the Watch Tower Society himself,

Brother Russell. The conversation translated by the Bible Student was very upbuilding and helped Mrs. Bachmann to progress. In the course of time she became a devoted servant of Jehovah, and both her husband and, at a later time, her son Fritz accepted the truth. Several other persons also manifested interest, so a study group was organized in Basel from 1909 onward. Fritz Bachmann, now advanced in age, is still a member of one of the Basel congregations.

NEED FOR FRENCH PUBLICATIONS

Zion's Watch Tower had been printed in the United States in German since 1897. When it also started to appear in French in 1903, Brother Weber rejoiced, but he felt that the *Studies in the Scriptures* were also sorely needed in French to promote Bible understanding. So he personally translated these. Other publications followed, and a small office of the Society with a literature depot was established in Yverdon in 1903.

The number here who were serving Jehovah was not very large. Meetings, even conventions, were held in private homes. But the future looked bright and the brothers were zealous. Adolf Weber was appointed manager of the work in the French field. For the German part of Switzerland, a small office for literature and information was established in Zurich and was supervised by the branch office in Barmen-Elberfeld, Germany.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S UPBUILDING VISITS

"General conventions" played an important role right from the beginning of the work. One was

held in Zurich in 1910 with about a hundred persons in attendance. From year to year the number of those attending increased. Brother Russell was frequently among them.

Looking back, one cannot but be impressed by his enterprising spirit. Travel in the early 20th century was not as comfortable and rapid as today, yet Brother Russell made the effort almost every year to cross the ocean in order to strengthen the brothers in Europe and give an impulse to the work. And what a busy schedule he had!

In 1912 he visited Geneva, Basel, Zurich, and St. Gallen. His public talk, "Beyond the Grave," was advertised by means of big posters depicting a finger pointing toward a procession of clergymen, with the words: "Woe unto you . . . for ye have taken away the key of knowledge." (Luke 11:52, *KJ*) The subject was a real eye-opener and caused a sensation. Throughout town, people would talk about the evidence that there is no hellfire, that the dead are unconscious, and that there is hope for them to live again. (Eccl. 9:10; Acts 2:22-31; 24:15) The news spread like wildfire. The halls rented never seemed to be big enough. Crowds often had to be turned away for lack of space. This proclaiming of the truth about the condition of the dead was pulling at the pillars of traditional religion.

EMBARRASSING QUESTIONS FOR THE CLERGY

Some people began to ask their pastors embarrassing questions. Among them was Clara Adler, who had received from a relative a booklet entitled

Where Are the Dead? and had read it with great interest. This clear explanation of the condition of the dead and the hope for all mankind impelled her to run to her minister to let him share her enthusiasm.

'Surely, he has never read anything so wonderful,' she thought. But alas, his response was: "I know, I know, . . . but it would be much better for you not to read such things." Sister Adler did not let herself be discouraged. She says: "Though I knew very little of the truth at that time, the words of the Bible meant more to me than what the pastor said. Now I realized that no theological study was necessary to understand the Word of God. Rather, God had given man the faculty of reasoning in order to make good use of it." This is what she did, and she has helped many others to do the same.

Although the truths being taught by Brother Russell greatly disturbed many clergymen, there were some who sympathized with his efforts to bring accurate knowledge of the Bible to the fore. One of them was Ludwig Reinhardt. In 1877 he published in German a translation of "The New Testament" that is noteworthy for rendering Luke 23:43 as follows: "And Jesus said to [the evildoer]: Truly I say to you *today*: You will be with me in Paradise." In correspondence with a Bible Student in 1908, this Protestant minister wrote: "So you see I know the 'Millennial-Dawn-Movement' very well and warmly appreciate the lively and self-sacrificing devotion of Bro. C. T. Russell and all of

his associates . . . As I am very keen to eliminate as many inaccuracies as I can and to publish a translation as faithful and as exact as possible, I would be very grateful to you and to Bro. Russell if you would note all the points you object to in my translation."

"PILGRIMS" STRENGTHEN THE FAITHFUL

"Pilgrims" were traveling representatives of the Society, as circuit overseers are today. Their efforts contributed to the unity of the brothers and brought them into closer contact with God's organization. The Society would announce in *Zion's Watch Tower* the proposed itinerary of the pilgrim brothers, and congregations and smaller groups along these routes would then write and express their desire to be visited. The pilgrims were excellent speakers, and their public lectures were usually well attended. In 1913, for example, their audiences in Switzerland totaled some 8,000 persons.

Brothers Herkendell and Buchholz from Germany, as well as other pilgrims, are still remembered by some for their loving assistance. They stayed only one or two days in each place, but they used their knowledge of the Bible to give spiritual insight to the brothers and to exhort newly interested ones not to let themselves be intimidated by opposers. The favorite subject of Brother Wellershaus was chronology. He used to give lengthy talks based on plans and charts, and whenever that work is mentioned, these still come to the minds of those present at that time.

IN EXPECTATION OF 1914

Since 1876, the attention of the Bible Students had been directed to the year 1914 as a turning point in history. The 2,520 years known as the Times of the Gentiles were then to end. (Luke 21:24) Sister Berta Obrist remembered how her family often scoffed at her when she told them about a war that was due to occur. "Now stop talking about this 1914!" her grandmother would say angrily. But how surprised and impressed her grandmother was when war really did break out in 1914!

The parents of little Hulda in Schaffhausen just could not believe that a big change in world events would take place in 1914 as an acquaintance repeatedly explained to them from the Bible. But Sister Hulda Peter remembers that her mother was really beside herself when the war did break out. Now she was full of questions, and she wanted, by all means, to get a Bible. As the truth unfolded before her eyes, she accepted it wholeheartedly, quit her former church, and dedicated herself to Jehovah God.

Others, too, were helped to sit up and take notice of the significance of the events enacted on the world's stage beginning in 1914. To that end, a wonderful instrument was prepared under Jehovah's direction. It was a series of four discourses with slides and motion pictures.

PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

The presentation of the *Photo-Drama of Creation* was a big success. The first showing in Bern

took place some weeks after the general mobilization of the Swiss Army had been proclaimed due to the outbreak of World War I, but total attendance over a period of two weeks amounted to more than 12,000. After that, it was shown to further appreciative crowds in towns and villages.

Among the 3,000 who submitted their names and addresses with a request for more information was Heinrich Heuberger, who saw the *Photo-Drama* in the village of Safenwil. The program lasted for four evenings, and he made sure not to miss any of it. He relates: "I was simply thrilled. I wanted to know more, so I filled in a card to this effect and mailed it the same evening. Soon after, I received a Bible Students' tract. Sometime later, I accepted an invitation to a public lecture and there I acquired the first volume of *Studies in the Scriptures*." His employer, the brother-in-law of a Protestant minister, made it very plain that he did not approve of the book. But Heinrich's interest was keen and he spent his free hours in the forest where he could read the book undisturbed.

In the small town of Brugg, the showing of the *Photo-Drama* in 1915 was scheduled to be held in the local inn "Zum Rothen Haus." The hall was filled to capacity long before the announced time, so the police closed the doors and turned away further arrivals. But a few intrepid young people, determined not to miss the presentation, put up ladders against the other side of the building and gained entrance through the open windows on the first floor.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FRENCH TERRITORY

During the years before 1914 there was good increase in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, but the work in the French-speaking territory lagged behind expectations. So special attention was given to this field by means of public lectures and showings of the *Photo-Drama of Creation*. All of this bore good fruit.

In 1912 the literature depot operating in Yverdon was transferred to Geneva and established as a branch office. From there, the work not only in French-speaking Switzerland but also in the French territory in all of Europe was supervised. The office was later relocated but on the same street. The branch now cared for 23 congregations, and the Memorial report of 1916 showed a total attendance of 256 for French-speaking Switzerland and 108 for France. In 1917, a total of 56,550 were present for showings of the *Photo-Drama*.

TESTS OF FAITHFULNESS RESULT IN A REFINING

The year 1918 brought tests of faithfulness and a refining so that the dross was cleaned out and those who truly loved Jehovah's ways became manifest. (Mal. 3:1-3) There were restrictions due to the war, particularly with regard to fuel, and this resulted in the canceling of some meetings. Besides, developments at the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn adversely affected the activity of the brothers over here. Some grew fearful. Others believed the work was approaching its end, and Armageddon was expected at any time. There was not much encourage-

ment from the brothers in charge. This was the situation when, on November 11, 1918, the war came to a stop.

More serious were the difficulties caused by L. A. Freytag, the one in charge of the office in Geneva. He had been authorized to publish a French translation of the English edition of *The Watch Tower* as well as *Studies in the Scriptures*. But he abused his position by publishing his own ideas. When Brother Rutherford, the Society's president, learned of this, Freytag was immediately discharged and the office in Geneva was closed. However, Freytag wanted to keep control of the Society's property in Geneva and refused to render an account over financial matters. Besides, he wanted to publish his own magazine under the name *La Tour de Garde (The Watch Tower)*. Grossly distorting the facts, he claimed that the Society had asked from him what was his own. Legal action against Freytag became necessary. He lost all three cases and finally had to return to the Society furniture and literature, as well as the *Photo-Drama of Creation*, and was forced to render a financial account. After that, connections were severed, and Freytag headed a movement of his own.

Though the congregations were emphatically warned and kindly exhorted, many persons followed Freytag. Sadly, of the 304 gathered for the French-language Memorial in 1919, only 75 remained with the Society, and even quite a few of these turned back to the world later on.

In spite of this development, Jehovah's spirit continued to strengthen the faithful ones. More

interested persons manifested themselves in all parts of the country, and these entered into the joys of the Kingdom work that lay ahead. Among these was Alice Berner. As a young girl, she had learned Psalm 103 by heart and was deeply moved by the words: "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." (*KJ*) This young lady worried the pastors of her church. She recalls: "My withdrawal from the Protestant Church caused some uproar. Two ministers tried to talk me into staying with their fold. But these discussions only helped me to see more clearly how necessary it was to separate from a system that was not based completely on Bible truth." Within a few years Sister Berner was devoting her full time to Jehovah's service. The fact that at 85 she is still a joyous and active Bethel worker (now in Germany) proves that she never regretted her decision.

The spring of 1919, the same year that Alice Berner first came in touch with the truth, brought good news from overseas: the brothers from Brooklyn headquarters, including the president of the Society, J. F. Rutherford, had been released from their unjust imprisonment on March 25, 1919! Soon Jehovah's people received needed instructions through the pages of *The Watch Tower* to help them appreciate the great work that was yet to be done. Rather than coming to an end, the witness work was to be pushed ahead as never before!

CENTRAL EUROPEAN OFFICE ESTABLISHED

The following year, Brother Rutherford visited Switzerland to get things moving. To reorganize the

work in war-torn Europe, it seemed best to establish a Central European Office, and Switzerland was deemed to be a good location for it because the country had not been actively engaged in the war. Eventually both the branch office for Switzerland and the Central European Office came together at 19 Usterstrasse in Zurich. A staff of ten persons was working there in 1924. Conrad Binkle was in charge, and one of the coworkers was Max Freschel, who later served at the headquarters in Brooklyn where he became known as the beloved Maxwell Friend.

The Central European Office was to supervise the work in Switzerland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Austria, Italy, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, and even Germany for a time. Some countries had their own local manager, but these were in close contact with the Central European Office, to which they sent their monthly reports. In turn, the office compiled the report and transmitted it to Brooklyn. It was also the task of this office to supply publications in various languages to the countries under its jurisdiction.

During these years, Brother E. Zaugg, who was in charge of the work in the French territories, had his office in Bern. In Bern also, some brothers had founded a printing company on their own initiative and had started to produce publications for the Society at favorable rates due to the fact that all the workers were dedicated persons. In time the Society took over those printing facilities, enlarged the



Brothers using "peace bell" on horse-drawn carriage in Zurich to stir up interest in the magazine "The Golden Age"

printery, and installed a rotary press on which the magazine *The Golden Age* was printed in German as of October 1922. Booklets and tracts in more than a dozen languages were produced in great quantities.

During Brother Rutherford's visit in 1924, however, it became obvious that larger facilities were needed to satisfy the enormous demand for literature in Europe after the war. Property across the street was acquired and work began on a new "Bible House," which was completed by the spring of 1925. In the new pressroom, yet another rotary press was installed. Over the years, the efficiency of this printery continued to improve, producing finally 500,000 hardbound books and one million booklets a year, besides magazines and tracts in at least 16 languages.

Switzerland

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CHANGES IN LOCATION AND DIRECTION

It was a big event when the Central European Office moved into this new building, 39 Allmendstrasse, on April 1, 1925.

Josef A. Bick remembered well the circumstances in connection with this relocation. "We looked forward to the new premises," he said, "but there was one big question on the minds of all staff members: Who was going to be put in charge? Three brothers were in line: C. C. Binkele, until then responsible for the Zurich office; E. Zaugg, already in Bern and responsible for the work there and in the French section; and there was also Jakob Weber, who cared for the colporteur and preaching work."

Were the brothers primarily interested in advancing the interests of true worship, or would personal pride and concern over position affect their ability to render humble service? "Those days were full of tension," according to Brother Bick, "but the president recognized well the situation." Since Brother Binkele's health was failing, it was suggested that he go to the United States for treatment. In his stead, Brother Zaugg was appointed to take the oversight. In the course of time, however, both Binkele and Zaugg abandoned true worship.

SERIOUS TESTINGS DURING 1925

The year 1925 started very promisingly with the new Bethel home and factory in Bern. The brothers were happy and were encouraged to push ahead with the work. However, some had their own personal convictions with respect to the year 1925. Would

they let themselves be admonished by *The Watch Tower* of January 1, 1925? It cautioned:

"The year 1925 is here. With great expectation Christians have looked forward to this year. Many have confidently expected that all members of the body of Christ will be changed to heavenly glory during the year. This may be accomplished. It may not be. In his own due time God will accomplish his purposes concerning his own people. Christians should not be so deeply concerned about what may *transpire* during this year that they would fail to joyfully *do* what the Lord would have them to do."

Among others, Jakob Weber, who was responsible for the Service Desk at Bethel, was not impressed. He was so sure that all the anointed would be glorified in heaven by the end of the year that he pursued a "liquidation course." He sent large quantities of literature to congregations without having received orders for it, instructing them to distribute the publications free of charge in their territory before the end of 1925.

All the efforts of the brothers at Bethel to reason with him were to no avail. Finally, he left not only Bethel but the truth and caused much grief among the brothers throughout the country, since he drew many with him. Some congregations were reduced to less than half their former size.

Another sad condition came to light within the Bethel family. Some had committed immoral acts. Quick action followed from the President's Office. Then, in February 1926, Martin C. Harbeck arrived from Brooklyn to take over the management of the office in Bern.

SWISS PUBLISHERS CARE FOR LIECHTENSTEIN

At this point it seems appropriate to mention something about Liechtenstein, one of the smallest countries in the world, situated across the river Rhine, between Switzerland and Austria. The Liechtensteiners like to call it the *Ländle* (Little Land), a fitting diminutive in view of its length of only 17 miles (27 km) and an average width of less than 4 miles (6 km). Most of its 27,076 inhabitants enjoy living in rural settlements without the pressures of city life. The capital, Vaduz, has a population of just 4,927 amid beautiful alpine surroundings.

Letting the light of Bible truth shine in this Catholic stronghold has been the responsibility of the publishers in Switzerland. In the 1920's, some brothers from Rorschach met with violent opposition when preaching in Liechtenstein. They were arrested and banished from the country. But in harmony with Jesus' prophecy at Mark 13:10, Louis Meyer, a former Salvation Army officer who accepted the truth in 1923, felt an earnest responsibility to see that sheeplike ones in Liechtenstein had opportunity to hear the truth. "Once, we made an effort to reach every household by mailing a booklet," he recalled. "The authorities reacted by bringing action against the 'unknown sender,' but they were unsuccessful because the Swiss Post Office refused to give the sender's name."

After consulting with the branch office, Brother Meyer organized a one-day assembly at the Hotel Rosengarten in Ragaz, not far from the border of Liechtenstein. The morning hours were reserved for house-to-house preaching. Responsible brothers

from the Service Department and the Legal Desk from Bethel would be present, just in case. Service instructions were clear cut: Give a short witness, hand over some publication, note interest, and leave. Should the police show up, phone immediately to the hotel.

Brother Meyer reports: "First, everything seemed to go well. But at the noon meal the publishers preaching in Liechtenstein were missing! Then came the phone call: 'All have been arrested and an important sum is demanded as bail.' They were retained in their bus in front of the government building, singing songs from 'Zion's Songbook.' This the authorities could not prohibit, but it made them quite nervous as it attracted the attention of the people round about."

With intervention of the brother from the Society's Legal Desk, the publishers were finally set free without bail. They felt that their singing had also contributed to their release.

DELIVERING UNFORGETTABLE MESSAGES

Over the years, longtime witnesses of Jehovah have had the privilege of delivering many unforgettable messages to the Swiss public. One of these was the lecture "Millions Now Living Will Never Die." Great crowds came to listen. Even today, elderly people to whom we witness remember the title of that talk! Some jokingly have slightly changed the title in the German language by dropping the letters *st* from the word *sterben* ("to die"), so that the title reads "Millions Now Living Will Never *Inherit*" (in German, *erben*). But the important thing is that people remember the message.



**Switzerland
branch and
printery from
1925
to 1970**

Also memorable was the message contained in the tract *Ecclesiastics Indicted*. Distribution of that tract back in the mid-1920's was an exciting work. The congregation at Zurich was assigned to cover a section of the Catholic canton of Schwyz. One intrepid brother, Gottfried Honegger, decided to hand out the tracts in front of the church at the end of Mass, but other brothers reasoned with him, saying: "You're out of your mind. They are going to do you serious harm if you provoke them so daringly."

So Brother Honegger dropped that plan, but he still undertook a courageous action. When the church services were over and all the men had gone to the inns to get their Sunday drink, he went from inn to inn and from table to table, quickly handing a tract to every man. When they saw what it was all about, an uproar broke out, so he discreetly withdrew to the waiting room of the railway station till things quieted down.

Jules Feller recalls the effort that went into the

**Martin C. Harbeck
(standing with
his wife) and
J. F. Rutherford**



distribution of that tract. He reminisces: "Five of us brothers of the Bethel family decided to cover a mountain valley, the Goms, with this tract. All being well-trained cyclists, we agreed to go by bicycle, but it would require two days to make the trip. So we started early one Saturday morning at the end of May. Everything went well until we reached a mountain pass still covered with a lot of snow. That was an obstacle we had never expected!"

So what did they do? Return? No. He says: "We courageously shouldered our loaded bicycles and started climbing in a zigzag course the steep hill in front of us. But it was much more troublesome than we had imagined, and dangerous at that. Besides, one of the brothers did not have good shoes, so he kept slipping on the frozen snow and went more backward than forward. He became so discouraged that he wanted to give up."

The other four brothers offered to help him carry his load, and finally, after a three-hour climb and a thunderstorm that soaked them to the skin, they reached the first village on the other side of the pass. There they strengthened themselves with a meal and a few hours of sleep. Brother Feller continues:

"The next morning at three o'clock, we started to slip the tracts under the doors or put them in the mailboxes. Later, when the people were up, we handed them out personally. Some got very angry and tore the tracts to shreds. But we calmly went on to cover the 20 villages of this staunch Catholic territory."

WITNESSING AT THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS BUILDING

The branch overseer, Martin C. Harbeck, was a dynamic person able to present the truth in a pleasing manner even to persons in high station. He procured a journalist's identification card for admittance to certain sessions of the League of Nations in Geneva. Striving hard for an opportunity to speak to some of these men, he got a chance to hand literature to Anthony Eden of England, to the German statesman Gustav Stresemann, and to Maksim Litvinov of Russia—all of them representing their countries at the League of Nations. Their attention was thus directed to the real means of uniting people of the nations in peace and justice, God's Kingdom by Christ.

Another effort to reach influential persons, as well as leaders of the nations, was made in 1932 during the Disarmament Conference in Geneva. In accord with what was written long ago in Psalm 2:10-12, a

copy of the booklet *The Kingdom, the Hope of the World* was mailed to them, as well as to leading clergymen, with a card enclosed urging them to pay the greatest attention to this message. In this way, a witness was given to 292 of these politically powerful ones of the earth.

A ROTARY PRESS FOR RUSSIA?

In Germany, Hitler had come to power in 1933, and the work of Jehovah's Witnesses there was soon banned. Brother Harbeck went to see about the Society's property in Magdeburg. However, he was arrested; he obtained release after ten days, only on condition that he leave the country immediately.

Then a brother from Brooklyn, New York, went to Germany to try to get the confiscated rotary press out of Germany and to ship it to Russia. The Society intended to further the preaching of the Kingdom good news in that country. But the Russian authorities were of the opinion that their people needed shoes rather than Bibles, so the Magdeburg rotary press was finally shipped to Bern, where it served well until it could be returned to Germany some years after the war.

WORKING WITH THE PHONOGRAPH

A new feature of the Kingdom-preaching work started in 1934 with the help of the phonograph. Publishers would tell householders that they had a five-minute Bible sermon that they would like to play. Usually the answer was: "Oh, but we have no phonograph!" When the publisher pointed to the one he had brought along, curiosity got the better of most householders, and they agreed to listen. Much

interest was aroused in this way, and literature placements were numerous.

Working with the phonograph was relatively easy. Even schoolchildren could do it. Ruth Bosshard (now in Bethel) remembers that in her early teens she would go on her school-free afternoons to her assigned territory and play records to certain ladies who welcomed her calls. At least one of those ladies eventually dedicated her life to God, much to the joy of that youthful Witness.

Sometimes unusual situations developed. Heinrich Heuberger recalled: "Once a family of six allowed me to play a recorded Bible talk. They were all assembled in the living room, but during the record-playing, one by one they quietly disappeared, leaving me all by myself at the end of the five-minute sermon. What could I do? Well, I packed up my phonograph, shouted '*Auf Wiedersehen!*' ('Until we see each other again') and went my way."

Patience and repeated contacts were necessary to permit new thoughts to sink into the minds of those tradition-bound folks.

'OUR GOD IS NOT A GOD OF DISORDER'

This is what Erwin Saner in Basel used to say, pointing to the clock, whenever a child would arrive late for the congregation's Sunday school.—1 Cor. 14:33.

Sunday school? Yes, indeed. For a time we had a separate youth group for those from 13 to 25 years of age, and a Sunday school for younger ones, based on the publication *The Way to Paradise* (edited in 1924 and "Dedicated to Youth for the Study in the Holy Scriptures" by W. E. Van Amburgh). Adult

members of the congregations took turns instructing the children on Sunday mornings. Ulrich Engler from Thalwil explained: "We parents went preaching on Sundays, and it was not the custom at that time to take the children along, neither would we take them to meetings in the evening. So when a youth group was formed in Zurich, we were glad that the children from the Thalwil Congregation were also invited."

The association "Jehovah's Youth" even had its own secretary's office in Bern. A special magazine named *Jehovah's Youth* was edited there and printed on the Society's presses. The preface to the first issue was written by Brother Rutherford. These youths conducted meetings and took an active part in the witness work. They also performed Bible dramas at bigger gatherings organized for the young ones. However, this was really an organization within the organization. The Bible shows that in ancient Israel the provision that Jehovah made was for adults and children to assemble together for instruction. (Deut. 31:12) When we came to appreciate this more fully, these special arrangements for youths were dissolved. This was done in 1936 at the time of Brother Rutherford's visit.

EFFORTS TO LET LIGHT SHINE IN ITALY

The Central European Office was concerned about Italy. The dictator Mussolini had come to power there, and the work of Jehovah's servants was banned. There were very few brothers in Italy and they were closely watched by the Fascist police. However, 500,000 copies of the booklet *The Kingdom, the Hope of the World* had been privately

printed in Milan, and they were awaiting distribution.

So it was planned that some Swiss brothers who were willing to take the risk would travel to northern Italy and, by a swift distribution of these booklets, let the light shine to people sitting in darkness. Alfred Gallmann from Basel was among those glad to share in this work. He reports:

"Together with a few other brothers and sisters I traveled to Milan, where we got instructions. The campaign was well organized. We worked in pairs; each pair had 50,000 booklets to distribute, and these had already been shipped to the respective cities. My partner and I were to cover the cities Verona, Vicenza, and Venice. The work was to be accomplished quickly in order to avoid clergy complaints and confiscation of the booklets by the police.

"Upon arrival, we looked for some young boys who would show us the way to the streets and alleys assigned to each of us. For a tip they were willing to help us by putting the booklets into the mailboxes. These boys thoroughly enjoyed this strange activity, ignoring totally what it was all about."

Was the campaign accomplished without any incidents? Almost. Some of the brothers were stopped by the police, but after a little explanation in their broken Italian, they let them go. At the end of the week, they all met again in Milan, rejoicing over what had been accomplished. The attention of at least a small part of Italy's vast population had been directed toward the only hope for freedom and righteousness, God's Kingdom.

GETTING SPIRITUAL FOOD INTO NAZI GERMANY

One of the tasks of the Central European Office was to maintain contact with the brothers suffering persecution. Though Germany was not under the jurisdiction of this office, the brothers in Bern made great efforts to supply those in Germany with vitally needed spiritual food.

To that end, the office sent typewritten copies of *Watchtower* articles to Karl Kalt, overseer in Basel. He recalled: "It was my responsibility to have some trustworthy brother or sister type about 30 copies of these articles on thin paper and have them ready for a certain date. We used to work every evening until midnight."

How did this material then reach the brothers in Germany? Because Basel was a frontier city, the distance was not great, and in those prewar years there was still much traffic across the border. Once in a while, though, travelers were searched thoroughly. Brother Kalt continued:

"Confidential persons from Germany would pick up the copies at my home and carry them across the border either in their shoes, between double soles, or under their clothing, delivering them safely to their destination. Often they did it at risk of life and limb." Such spiritual food reached not only those Witnesses who were at liberty to move about but also those in the concentration camps.

SOLIDARITY WITH THE WITNESSES IN GERMANY

The brothers in Germany were under extreme pressure, and their fellow servants throughout the

earth felt it with them. As the apostle Paul wrote: "If one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it." (1 Cor. 12:26) This was highlighted by what took place at a special gathering of all congregations on Sunday, October 7, 1934, at 9:00 a.m. At that time a sealed envelope was to be opened. It was the text of a telegram to be sent to Hitler's government. It read as follows:

"Hitler Government, Berlin, Germany. Your ill-treatment of Jehovah's witnesses shocks all good people of earth and dishonors God's name. Refrain from further persecuting Jehovah's witnesses; otherwise God will destroy you and your national party."

This telegram was dispatched on the very same day from congregations in 50 different countries, including those in Germany. Imagine the flood of telegrams converging on Berlin on that day! It was not only a warning to Hitler and his party; this was also a demonstration of unity and solidarity of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide. As for the outcome, the fate of Hitler and of his political party is well known.

"CRUSADE AGAINST CHRISTIANITY"

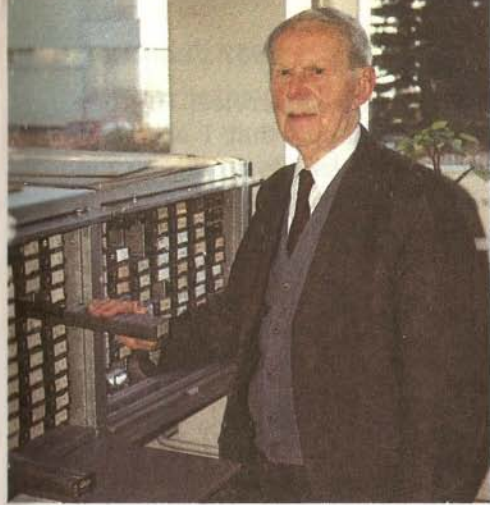
To draw the attention of the general public to Jehovah's Witnesses' resistance to Nazi terror, the Society's office in Brooklyn approved the publishing of the book *Kreuzzug gegen das Christentum* (Crusade Against Christianity). It described in detail the thorny path of Jehovah's Witnesses in Nazi Germany. It contained the experiences of more than a hundred brothers and sisters and was, above all, a testimony to the fact that men and women fought, suffered, and died in Nazi Germany because of their

faith. The book was published by the Europa-Verlag in Zurich, a secular publishing company, and it was exhibited in bookshops and newsstands. It was translated into French and Polish but not into English.

The well-known writer Dr. Thomas Mann stated in a letter to the Society: "... you have done your duty by publishing this book openly, and it seems to me that there is no greater appeal to the World's conscience than this publication." A Protestant minister, Th. Bruppacher, remarked in a Swiss newspaper on August 19, 1938: "The future church historian must some day acknowledge that not the great churches, but several of the slandered and scoffed-at people of the sects, were the ones who stood up first of all against the rage of the Nazi-demon and who dared to make opposition according to the faith. They suffer and bleed because as 'Jehovah's Witnesses' and candidates for the Kingdom of Christ they refuse the worship of Hitler, the swastika, the German greeting and the forced participation in the elections."

A HAVEN FOR REFUGEE PIONEERS

In 1936 the Society acquired the farm "Bärenmoos," near Steffisburg/Thun, to provide the Bethel family with healthful food at the lowest cost possible. Two years later, another farm, called Chanéla, situated near Neuchâtel, was also purchased. Both farms provided refuge for pioneers obliged to leave their assignments abroad and not able to return to their homelands. This was particularly true of German pioneers who had been serving in the Balkans. Upwards of 30 brothers and sisters worked at these farms as farmhands, and this, by the way, was the



Heinrich Dwenger, in Bethel service from 1910 to 1983, in Subscription Department at Thun

only kind of work for which a residence permit was granted by the Swiss authorities.

One brother serving at Bärenmoos was Heinrich Dwenger. Born in Germany in 1887, he was baptized in Barmen in 1909 when he visited the branch office there. Right then and there he was invited into full-time service. The decision was not an easy one because his parents were not in the truth and they had high expectations regarding employment for their son. However, he entered full-time service in October 1910, serving first at the branch in Barmen and then in Magdeburg. Later, he fulfilled difficult assignments in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Tracked down by the German Gestapo, he finally made his way to Switzerland as instructed by the Society. As a farmhand at Bärenmoos, he gladly cared for the pigs. In later years he served in the Subscription Department at the branch office in Switzerland.

Reviewing his life in Jehovah's service, Brother Dwenger said: "I am very happy that I accepted seriously the Scriptural responsibility to preach the good news of God's Kingdom. I have spent many of my years serving in Bethel homes in various countries, where it has not been my place to choose the work that pleased me, but, rather, to fulfill the tasks assigned. How happy I am that I have always sought to follow the direction of Jehovah through his earthly organization by faithfully carrying out these assignments! For truly it is this obedience that has been a source of rich blessings."

On January 30, 1983, at the age of 96, Brother Dwenger finished his earthly course. In the memory of numerous brothers and sisters both inside and outside of Switzerland, Heinrich Dwenger remains an example of modesty, humility, and obedience—an example to imitate.

While working temporarily at the farm Chanélaz, Oskar Hoffmann and his wife Anni especially enjoyed the companionship of Adolf Weber, who started the preaching of the good news in Switzerland back in 1900. He had seen many make a promising start in Jehovah's service but then turn to the things behind. Though some had allowed feelings of self-importance to overreach them, Brother Weber had continued to serve Jehovah loyally and humbly. He had become advanced in years and was ailing, so he spent the winter months at the farm. His modesty, strong faith, and zealous service left a deep impression on all who knew him. Finally, at the age of 85, he finished his earthly course in February 1948.

TACKLING A CATHOLIC STRONGHOLD

In 1922, in connection with one of Brother Rutherford's visits, it had been decided to try to arrange for a public talk in Lucerne, fortress of Catholicism. The brothers had managed to find a place seating 850 persons, and every seat had been filled. Attention had been rapt, and not a single person had left the hall before the end. The audience had shown their full accord by prolonged and repeated applause, which had obliged Brother Rutherford to return to the speaker's stand. There he had taken leave of the public by calling out: "Auf Wiedersehen!"

He kept his promise. An international convention was arranged for Lucerne, to be held from September 4 to 7, 1936. Brothers attended from practically every European country, some even from Nazi Germany, although they risked their lives and freedom to do so. In fact, Nazi agents secretly photographed German conventioners, and these were arrested immediately on their return home.

The widely advertised lecture to be given by Brother Rutherford was "Armageddon—The Battle of Almighty God." At the last moment, however, it was banned for the public by the cantonal authorities of Lucerne. The brothers were able to hear it, but a crowd of about 2,000 others were kept from getting into the hall because of police interference. Nevertheless, the brothers were determined that the public would receive the message. They had found a printery that was willing to print the material in six hours; so the text of the talk was available for distribution to all who were being prevented

from entering the hall. Thus a more long-lasting witness was given to the city of Lucerne, much to the dismay of the clergy who were behind the prohibition.

When the suppression of freedom of assembly became public knowledge, much indignation was expressed through the Swiss press. The *National-Zeitung* of Basel asked at the end of a lengthy article: "Where is the freedom fading away to of which we were so proud?"

CLERGY EFFORTS BOOMERANG

Brother Rutherford, a courageous and straightforward man, presented a resolution to the conventioners on the following day. It read in part: "We now sound the warning to the rulers in Germany and to the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, and to all like organizations that cruelly persecute the true and faithful followers of Christ Jesus, that the fate of such God declares is complete destruction. (Psalm 145: 20)" A copy of this resolution was sent by registered letter both to the pope and to Hitler.

But that was not all. On the last day of the convention, about a thousand Witnesses distributed in and around Lucerne more than 10,000 copies of the booklet *Choosing, Riches or Ruin?* Some publishers were arrested and their literature was confiscated. Several newspapers criticized the measures taken by the authorities, but in reality a much wider witness was given in this way. What is more, a special issue of *The Golden Age* was prepared containing all the facts about this convention.

Here you see the front cover of that magazine depicting a priest's black hat on a pole before the



Title page of the special issue of "The Golden Age" giving the facts about the memorable convention in Lucerne

skyline of Lucerne! The text below the picture reads "Der neue Gesslerhut" ("The New Gessler Hat"). Who was this Gessler? In Friedrich Schiller's epic *Wilhelm Tell*, Gessler is portrayed as an oppressive bailiff who tried to subjugate the freedom-loving people around Lake of Lucerne in the 13th century. He is said to have pitched his hat on a pole and forced the people to bow to it in submission and allegiance. So the symbol of despotism—Gessler's hat—figured on the front cover of this special issue of *The Golden Age*, thus alluding to the clergy-inspired suppression of freedom of speech on this occasion.

There were 100,000 copies of this issue printed, 20,000 of which were mailed free of charge to all households in Lucerne and its surroundings. A reprint of 18,000 copies became necessary, and these, too, were used up within a few days. Even today that 1936 convention in Lucerne lingers in the memory of many!

One person whose attention was aroused by that special issue of *The Golden Age* was Edouard Zysset, who was living in Bern. He contacted the Society's office, and after a lively discussion with the responsible editor, Brother Zürcher, he left with a stack of publications under his arm. Four years later, in 1940, both he and his wife Yvonne were immersed. Especially since then, they both have been of great help to the Society by proofreading publications and contributing to the preparation of our French Bible concordance, as well as strengthening French congregations. On two different occasions they served as members of the Bethel family.

FIGHTING IN THE COURTS DURING THE THIRTIES

Switzerland is known the world over as one of the oldest democracies. Historians glorify the fight for freedom from foreign domination put up by the founders of the Confederation, and the Swiss take pride in their constitution, which guarantees, among other things, freedom of religion and conscience. All the more surprising, therefore, was the intensive battle in the courts that was necessary 'to defend and legally establish' our right to preach from house to house by word of mouth and printed page. (Phil. 1:7) This battle lasted for almost three decades. In 1935 alone, 111 legal difficulties had to be dealt with, about half of which were settled in our favor.

What were the reasons, and who was behind all that trouble caused to the proclaimers of God's Kingdom? The leading representatives of "Babylon the Great," who were displeased with the increasing activities of Jehovah's Witnesses. The symbolic locust

plague depicted in the prophecies of Joel and Revelation had reached them, and they felt tormented by the message of judgment.

For example, the booklet *Escape to the Kingdom* caused one Catholic priest to declare: "This publication contains a lot of Biblical distortions, absurdities, vulgar defamations, intended to mislead the people, and low appeal to the sensual inclinations of mankind. And should we as Catholics tolerate such manipulations? Surely there are legal provisions to render harmless these low-down fellows and demagogues. Should we not make use of our power? We urgently ask the competent authorities to deal rigorously with these malicious Bible students and to give them what they deserve."

THEY DID MAKE USE OF THEIR POWER

The consequences of continual clerical pressure upon the authorities began to be felt. Instigated by local priests, the police frequently arrested publishers as they shared in field service. Accusations ranged from offending religious feelings by strong wording or illustrations in our publications, to disturbing confessional peace or breaking Sunday rest laws. Often we were also accused of peddling without a license.

In the canton of Lucerne, the publication *Light*, Book One, was forbidden because of certain pictures it contained. In another Catholic canton, Fribourg, some publishers were accused in court of outrageous criticism of the Catholic Church by their distribution of the book *Deliverance*, and we lost the case. The canton of Graubünden prohibited the distribution of any of our literature, and the Catholic canton of Zug

banned the "peace-disturbing activity" of Jehovah's Witnesses. Subsequently, the cantonal government of Lucerne followed suit.

In these and dozens of other cases we challenged the legality of the measures taken against us. This required fighting through the courts, sometimes all the way up to the Federal Supreme Court. We suffered defeats, but we also rejoiced in victories. Jehovah backed up his people, and it was faith-strengthening to observe how the publishers participated in this fight for freedom to preach the truth. They continued to engage in field service, although in certain territories an arrest was almost sure to take place.

THE AIM OF THE ENEMY: TOTAL PROHIBITION

"It is high time to put an end to the activity of the Bible Students alias Jehovah's Witnesses" was an expression coming up frequently, particularly in the Catholic press. Seeing that Jehovah's Witnesses had been banned in Nazi Germany, our enemies in Switzerland felt encouraged to pursue the same goal. Slander and misrepresentation were their weapons.

A powerful means was the *Swiss Press Correspondence*, a monthly information paper forwarded to all authorities and newspaper editors. It had close connections with the "Society for Church and Pope" founded in St. Gallen in 1931. This paper was very anxious to make Jehovah's Witnesses appear to be a most suspicious organization, hostile to the State and supporting the idea of a Jewish world government. Working toward the suppression of our work and the distribution of our literature, it stated: "This

muddy flood, going out from Bern and engulfing all the countries of Europe, puts us Catholics in Switzerland under obligation to see to it that the [Swiss] headquarters be dissolved. We may not tolerate that our wonderful country is misused as the starting point of an insidious Bolshevistic agitation." Another absurd assertion!

The responsible director of this paper, Mr. Toedtli, instituted legal proceedings against Martin C. Harbeck and Franz Zürcher, representatives of the Society, on the grounds of "degradation of religion." At the same proceedings it was to be clarified whether the Society's publications constituted "trashy literature" or not. The accusations presented by Mr. Toedtli were based on a lengthy opinion of Mr. Fleischhauer, member of the National Front and director of the Anti-Jewish and National-Socialist Propaganda Center in Erfurt, Germany. This man pretended that the Bible Students were camouflaged communists "who strive together with Freemasons and Jews for the violent overthrow of all Christian governments in order to erect on the ruins of Christendom a Jewish empire."

BROTHER RUTHERFORD PRESENT AT HEARINGS

When the case was heard before a tribunal in Bern on August 26, 1936, Brother Rutherford was in Switzerland. He appeared in court and bore testimony as author of the literature in question. "If the publications embraced in the charges are 'trash literature,' as charged, the Word of Almighty God is 'trash literature,'" he argued, since both the comparisons and the illustrations objected to are based on

texts in the Bible books of Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Revelation. "It is manifest that the lawmakers had no intention to forbid the distribution of the Holy Scriptures or a published explanation of the same. These publications contain the truth and nothing but the truth; and, said the Lord Jesus Christ: 'Sanctify them with thy truth; thy Word is truth.' (John 17:17)" With that Brother Rutherford concluded.

After five hours of arguments and counterarguments, the president of the court, Mr. Lehmann, arrived at the conclusion that the officials of the Watch Tower Society, Martin C. Harbeck and Franz Zürcher, could not be convicted of transgressing the law against "trashy literature" nor had religion been degraded in the publications turned out by the Society's printery in Bern. The defendants were acquitted and the plaintiff was ordered to pay each defendant SFr. 150.- (\$35, U.S.) as a contribution to defense expenses.

THE CASE WAS APPEALED

The Catholic press all over the country cried shame upon the court and called it "an unbelievable misjudgment." Toedtli appealed the case, and it was heard again on May 28, 1937, by the Bernese High Court. The verdict passed by the first tribunal was reversed and the Society's representatives were now ordered to pay a fine of SFr. 100.- (\$23, U.S.) for "degradation of religion." Nevertheless, the court maintained the opinion that there was no transgression of the law against "trashy literature."

Hardly a year later the instigators behind Toedtli were exposed when he was tried and found guilty of espionage in favor of Nazi Germany and condemned

to a three-month imprisonment. However, he had already escaped and was condemned *in absentia*.

OFFICIAL BAN OF BOOKLET

In the year 1939 the situation in Europe was tense. Switzerland was almost encircled by totalitarian powers. Although their ideologies were generally rejected, the Swiss authorities were anxious to avoid provoking these dangerous neighbors. The situation became even more tense when the German Nazi troops were around Switzerland on every side. To the west they were in France, to the east in Austria, and to the south in Italy. Switzerland and Liechtenstein were completely isolated, like an island in a roaring sea. In this atmosphere, Jehovah's people courageously distributed the booklet *Fascism or Freedom*, which presented this issue: "Shall the world be ruled in righteousness by Christ the enthroned King of Jehovah? or shall it be ruled by selfish, arbitrary dictators?" That booklet labeled Hitler 'a representative of Satan' and exposed the Roman Catholic Hierarchy for "working hand in glove with the Fascists"!

Millions of copies of this booklet were distributed in the countries under the Central European Office. But it came as no surprise when the booklet was banned by the Office of the Swiss State Attorney following a decision of the Federal Council. Nevertheless, there was much debate in the press about this measure. The Society reacted with a tract, 400,000 copies of which were distributed throughout Switzerland. An avalanche of opposition followed as we were often accused of making propaganda for communism. Many a meeting in Catholic territory

was prevented or interrupted, but, according to Josef Dvorak of Lucerne, "it may be said that whenever the difficulties were greatest, then the best spirit was reigning within the congregation." Without the backing of Jehovah's spirit, the brothers might have tired and slackened in withstanding the continual attacks of the enemy. But instead they were willing to "put up a hard fight for the faith," and their trusting in Jehovah was rewarded.—Jude 3.

An example of their willingness is reported by the congregation of Buchs, St. Gallen. This congregation had a sizable stock of the booklet *Fascism or Freedom*, which was banned in Switzerland. The brothers decided the best thing to do was to distribute these booklets abroad—in neighboring Liechtenstein. Because of the customs union with Switzerland, there is no checking when crossing the border. Karl Dangelmeier was one of the brothers who used his evenings to spread the booklet in Liechtenstein. "Imagine the stir among the people," he relates, "especially because of the picture of the pope in company with Hitler and Mussolini! Newspapers carried indignant articles, and the Catholic youth movement was ready to tackle us, but we were cautious and never carried a bag with us. Thus we finished our campaign undetected, and the booklets reached the people."

1939: WORLD WAR II ERUPTS!

It was no easy task for the Swiss government to navigate in the shadow of totalitarian powers that were overrunning country after country. The army was mobilized to guard the borders. Since military

service is obligatory, this brought great tests for men dedicated exclusively to God. Following the dictates of their Christian consciences, most of Jehovah's Witnesses refused to take up armed service. (Isa. 2: 2-4; Rom. 6:12-14; 12:1, 2) For this a goodly number of Witnesses were brought before military courts. The sentences meted out varied from several months to five years in prison. Often, after having served one term, the brothers were again called to the army, and the procedure started all over. A second sentence was always longer than the first.

Of all the Witnesses who were sentenced as conscientious objectors, Fernand Rivarol of Geneva was in prison the longest. This cost him his secular employment, and understandably, it presented problems for his wife and small daughter. But Jehovah provided encouragement for him in the person of a prison warden who at that time was already interested in the truth. He seized every opportunity his duty allowed to comfort Brother Rivarol, as well as the two brothers incarcerated with him, both physically and spiritually. The firm stand of these servants of God contributed to the prison warden's becoming our zealous brother, Emile Bolomey.

From the position taken by our brothers, the authorities wrongly concluded that the Society's activities were directed against the interests of the State, that these deliberately incited to antimilitaristic action. They even accused the Society of subversive activity, most unjustly so!

CENTRAL EUROPEAN OFFICE CLOSES

With the start of World War II, the activity of the Central European Office was greatly hampered as

one country after another came under totalitarian control. Contact with the brothers became very difficult or ceased altogether. The work of the Central European Office became obsolete, so in early summer of 1940 Brother Harbeck and his wife returned to the United States, where they were assigned to zone and circuit work.

Responsibility for the work in Switzerland was now placed in the hands of Franz Zürcher, who had entered Bethel service in 1923. He had shared in showing the *Photo-Drama of Creation* in Belgium, the Saarland, the valley of the Nahe River, the Rhineland, Alsace-Lorraine, and, of course, throughout Switzerland. Later on, he had been entrusted with editorial work for the German edition of *The Golden Age*. In connection with the Service Desk, he had also enjoyed caring for nearly 100 pioneers in countries under the Central European Office.

It was a very difficult period in which Brother Zürcher took over responsibility for the branch in Switzerland. He had to trust heavily in Jehovah's direction. The aim of our enemies was nothing less than total prohibition of the work of Jehovah's Witnesses. The Catholic press carried articles charging that Jehovah's Witnesses pursued political aims and that their activity was inimical to the State. These articles appeared under headings such as "The Earnest Bible Students—Pioneers of Bolshevism" and "Moscow's Henchmen—The Bible Students."

In this climate the military authorities felt called upon to take action. Early in the afternoon of July 5, 1940, a truckload of soldiers occupied the Society's



Franz Zürcher,
branch overseer
from 1940 to 1953

branch office and factory in Bern. The Bethel family was ordered to assemble in the dining room and was kept there until a thorough search had been made. Some rooms were sealed off, and great quantities of literature were confiscated and carried away. What they were looking for was some statement proving that the Society directly instigated refusal to do military service. An investigation got under way.

HOMES OF BROTHERS SEARCHED

Soon after, on a given day at a fixed hour, a number of homes of overseers and publishers throughout Switzerland were invaded and searched. Literature was confiscated and interrogations by officials were recorded.

Emile Walder relates: "At seven o'clock in the morning the doorbell rang in our apartment at 37 Marchwartstrasse in Zurich-Wollishofen. Two sturdy men, detectives of the cantonal police force, presented a search warrant and entered unhesitatingly. They looked into everything and found my bag with the documents and the contributions from last evening's meeting, since I was account servant

at that time. They checked into it and confiscated everything. I had to accompany them to police headquarters. There they tried a little brainwashing on me, hoping to get more names and addresses of brothers. But they did not succeed. Later another detective accompanied me to the bank where I worked in order to check my private bank safe to see whether anything incriminating the Society could be found there. But it was to no avail."

IMPOSITION OF CENSORSHIP

Without waiting for the result of the investigation, the Swiss Army Staff placed *The Watchtower* under preliminary censorship. To this the Society could not assent. How could spiritual food from Jehovah be censored by army men of this system of things? So *official* publication of *The Watchtower* was discontinued. But the brothers—by now more than a thousand—did not suffer spiritual want because of this. They received typewritten and mimeographed articles for private study, and these were passed from one to another in the congregations. In this way they kept abreast of the continually advancing light.

In order to have literature for field distribution, however, permission was obtained from the censorship authorities to print the magazine *Consolation* (formerly *The Golden Age*) and booklets. The authorities' constant request to choose cautious wording when dealing with the situation in the world mirrored their fear of their powerful neighbors.

Brother Jules Feller, in Bethel service for more than 60 years now, was the one appointed to bring the manuscripts to the censor's office. "Usually they



Jules Feller began his Bethel service in 1924; still active at 86 years of age

did not object to the texts," he remembers. "Once in a while they found an expression too straightforward and asked to formulate it differently. Of course, things can be said in various ways without watering down the truth. But one day I was received in a very hostile way. The officials reproached Jehovah's Witnesses as just profiting from the State but not wanting to do anything for it, such as military service. It was a real attack.

"A lengthy discussion ensued. For two hours a hail of questions battered down on me from the four men present on that day. I really experienced the truth of Jesus' words in Matthew 10:18, 19: 'You will be haled before governors and kings for my sake, for a witness to them and the nations. However, . . . do not become anxious about how or what you are to speak; for what you are to speak will be given you in that hour.' The conversation turned out a victory for the truth. After that we were treated obligingly until the end of the war."

BROTHER ZÜRCHER CONVICTED

However, as a result of the investigation undertaken by the military authorities, action was taken against the branch overseer, Brother Zürcher. He was falsely accused of undermining the military discipline and of acting in contravention of the ban on propaganda dangerous to the State. Two years elapsed before the trial was finally held on November 23 and 24, 1942. The military prosecutor's speech was like a hail of pounding ice. He called Brother Zürcher a demagogue of the worst kind that belonged behind lock and key. Quotations from the publication *Light*, Book Two, pages 171-4, were made, where it mentions that the remnant will watch from a secure place during the great slaughter of those composing Satan's organization, including kings, captains, and mighty men. As one of the charges was undermining military discipline, it was evident why such a declaration roused the prosecutor's anger. He roared: "This is draft-dodging, military cowardice in the highest degree. Here you have a picture of their attitude towards the Swiss Armed Service!"

The defense lawyer, Mr. Johannes Huber, a highly respected parliamentarian and a member of the National Council, mentioned that during his 40 years of practice he had never before handled a case in such an atmosphere of total prejudice. According to him, this trial was not really against the accused person but, rather, against Jehovah's Witnesses as a whole. It was an effort to silence them. Concluding his pleading, he said: "Hence it was not merely a matter of fulfilling a client's mandate for me, but, despite our

differences of opinion, I felt it was my duty to stand up for these people who are so misunderstood and on whom such bitter injustice is being inflicted. For this reason I beg the court to render an acquittal." Notwithstanding, Brother Zürcher was condemned to two years of penal servitude in jail and the loss of certain civil rights.

Our lawyer filed an appeal with the Appeal Court of Record. The final decision was handed down on April 16, 1943. The verdict was changed to one year of penal servitude, suspended sentence, and a five-year loss of some civil rights. In view of the prevailing circumstances, this was an extremely mild sentence.

CONNECTIONS WITH BROOKLYN INTERRUPTED IN 1942

Right from the beginning of hostilities, all letters addressed to the Society were censored, but when the United States entered the war, all connections with the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn were severed. So the English edition of *The Watchtower* was received only until the issue of October 1, 1942, which contained the article "The Only Light." When it was no longer possible to receive the English copies, how was the branch going to get spiritual food for the brothers under its supervision?

Jehovah saw to it that it was possible to get in touch with the branch in Sweden, another one of the few European countries not involved in the war. From there we obtained current issues of *The Watchtower*, but they were in Swedish! There was no one among the Swiss brothers who had mastered this language, but a certain similarity between Swedish and German was evident. Encouraged by this fact, Alice Berner,

now at the branch in Germany but at that time a member of the Bethel family in Bern, undertook the study of Swedish. After a relatively short time, she was able to translate *The Watchtower* into German, and thus it was possible to supply the brothers with spiritual food during the next two years. In all, 42 articles and two booklets were provided in this way.

When the war was over, Brooklyn headquarters sent a complete collection of all the articles that had appeared in the English *Watchtower* during the time of the interruption. How many articles had the Swiss brothers missed during the war? *Not a single one!* The first edition received in Swedish had contained the articles of the English issue following the article "The Only Light." The flow of the waters of truth had been uninterrupted during all those war years! Surely, you can appreciate how thankful we were to Jehovah, the great Provider!—Compare Genesis 22:14.

FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

Not only spiritually but also materially Jehovah saw his people through. Nevertheless, there were financial problems. Why? The work was supported by voluntary contributions, and many of the brothers were financially hard pressed during the war years. Also, since we stopped printing *The Watchtower* and no literature could be sent to other European countries, less money was received from this source. Under these circumstances there was not enough work for all members of the Bethel family, so a number of brothers and sisters indicated their willingness to leave Bethel, although they were unanimous that their years at Bethel had been the happiest time in their life.

However, serious financial problems continued. This situation made it necessary, among other things, to reduce the allowance of the Bethel and farm workers to SFr. 10.- per month (about \$2.33, U.S.), yet the brothers agreed to this measure of economy without complaint.

A BOOK IN THE COLOR OF YOUR CHOICE

In the midst of the war years, a thrilling convention was held in Zurich in 1942. On Sunday morning the front rows of the convention hall were full of glowing young faces! This was to be a special event for them. In a talk addressing them in particular, they were reminded to be diligent, obliging, helpful and kind, and above all, to obey their parents in accord with the Bible's counsel. At the end of this lecture, the book *Children* was released, and every one of those young folks was to receive a free copy.

Brothers stepped to the platform, each one with a supply of books in nine different hues. Then all the children were invited to walk across the platform, and each one received a book in the color of his choice. What a joy that was for the children! More than 400 books were thus placed in the hands of prospective Witnesses. Quite a number of those children became zealous workers and are still active in Jehovah's organization.

THEOCRATIC MINISTRY SCHOOL SUPERSEDES PHONOGRAPH

The year 1944 saw the introduction of a new arrangement, the Theocratic Ministry School, in the Swiss congregations. At the beginning of the year this training was adopted at the Bern Bethel. During

the following months the course in public speaking, along with helpful counsel on how to present the Kingdom message to householders, was put into operation in the congregations throughout the country. As the brothers became more skillful in explaining the good news, phonograph recordings began to be replaced by the publishers' own short sermons.

For many Witnesses this change in method of preaching was most welcome, as some had found a heavy phonograph and a bag containing literature to be quite a bit to carry in the field service. More than that, the change marked advancement in the quality of our ministry.

END OF WAR IN VIEW

On June 6, 1944, the invasion of the Allied troops began in Normandy, France, and on August 15 the Allied military forces set foot on the French Mediterranean Coast. With the increasing evidence of a coming breakdown of Nazism and victory of the Allied forces, the authorities in Switzerland began to relax the measures imposed on Jehovah's Witnesses and the Society. It was as predicted in Revelation 12:16: "The earth [more stable democratic powers] came to the woman's help, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the river [of totalitarian opposition] that the dragon disgorged from its mouth."

The responsible brothers at the branch office sighed with relief! Brother Rutherford had urged them to avoid, if possible, the total prohibition of the work and the closing down of the branch in Switzerland. They had experienced many a precarious situation, but now the worst was behind them. The branch was still functioning and the work was alive! The

brothers felt like David when he composed Psalm 34:19: "Many are the calamities of the righteous one, but out of them all Jehovah delivers him."

Soon, the literature confiscated by the Swiss Army Staff in July 1940 was returned to the Society. It took the soldiers several days to accomplish an exact counting of the publications. All of these were later put to good use in the field.

How would you feel if, after four years of interruption, you again had a printed copy of *The Watchtower* in your hands? Well, the German- and French-speaking brothers were overjoyed when, from October 1, 1944, onward, the magazine was again published regularly, though only once a month. About a year later it once more was published semimonthly.

WORLD WAR II ENDED, BUT OUR FIGHT CONTINUED

On May 8, 1945, the Western nations celebrated the end of World War II in Europe, but in Switzerland the battle for freedom of worship and the right to preach continued. In most parts of the country we enjoyed more liberty of action than during the war, but in Catholic areas there was still a lot of opposition.

For example, when the public lecture "Will Man Succeed as a World-Builder?" was being delivered in the city of Zug in January 1946, the police suddenly appeared in the hall and stopped the speaker. The Society took legal action, bringing the case before the Federal Supreme Court in Lausanne. As a result, the unconstitutional ban imposed by the authorities of Zug was struck down, and newspaper reports

carried headlines such as "Jehovah's Witnesses Have Obtained Their Right" and "Freedom of Worship Must Be Maintained." You can be sure, however, that the Catholic press did not report on this verdict in such a positive way.

HELP FOR THE BROTHERS IN GERMANY

When news came of the distressing conditions in which our faithful brothers emerging from the concentration camps found themselves, the Swiss brothers did not 'shut the door of their tender compassions.' (1 John 3:17) They busied themselves with a relief campaign in the spirit of the early Christian communities. (Acts 11:29, 30; 2 Cor. 8:1-4) Large quantities of clothing and household goods were donated, and some sisters offered their time and services to see to it that all items were in good condition. Finally, 444 cases with a net weight of about 28 tons (25,000 kg) were shipped to Germany in 1946 and 1947. The value of this relief program totaled up to more than SFr. 262,000.- (at that time about \$61,000, U.S.). "When we heard of the joy and gratitude of our German brothers and sisters, we were very happy and felt largely recompensed for the extra work this campaign had required of us," recalled a sister who had lent a helping hand.

As much as material help was necessary, there was also a great need for spiritual food to strengthen the brothers and give them a good start for postwar activity. So Bible literature was also sent to Germany from the branch in Switzerland, and we considered it a great privilege to contribute thus in some small way toward the reconstruction of the work in Germany.

LONG-EXPECTED VISIT OF BROTHER KNORR

We could hardly wait for the first visit of the Society's president after the war. Eight eventful years had elapsed, and Nathan H. Knorr had become president. His visit to Bern in 1945 was very brief, but he returned in May 1947. Wanting to make it a big event, we planned an assembly in the beautiful Convention Hall in Zurich.

"The Joy of All the People" was the theme of his public talk on Friday evening of the convention. Joyful indeed were the publishers as they distributed 100,000 handbills, put up posters, and marched as placard bearers through the city streets. The newspapers also carried advertisements of the public talk. We wanted everyone in Zurich to know what was going on!

Finally, 1,540 persons attended the lecture. At the end of the meeting, a booklet was handed out to all non-Witnesses. Since 800 booklets were distributed, we concluded that the majority of those present were interested persons who had responded to our invitation. This was satisfying indeed.

STRESSING PIONEER SERVICE

From the time of the early colporteurs, there had always been some faithful full-time preachers serving both in the German and in the French territories. But admittedly they were very few. For example, among the 1,462 publishers in 1945, there were only three pioneers! Brother Knorr found this figure out of proportion to the abundant opportunities in the country. He concluded that a factor contributing to this low number of pioneers was that much literature

was placed free of charge to avoid clashing with the peddling regulations, thus making it necessary for the publishers themselves to carry all the costs and expenses for the preaching work.

His observation was correct. Some brothers did have to abandon full-time preaching because they could not meet their expenses. In order to assist those who might share in the pioneer work, the problem of asking for voluntary contributions had to be resolved.

HOW TO SOLVE IT

Traveling in the company of Brother Knorr was Hayden Covington, at that time the Society's lawyer in Brooklyn. At the convention he explained that they had gone to court in the United States for the right to accept voluntary contributions, without the need of a peddler's license, for literature distributed in connection with preaching the gospel. The Switzerland branch would have to fight for the rights and privileges of the Christian ministry all the way up through the law courts until this issue could be clarified. It was to be a united action of all publishers in Switzerland. Their willingness to cooperate was shown by enthusiastic applause. That assembly in Zurich proved to be a milestone in the history of the Kingdom work in Switzerland.

THE PEDDLING-WITHOUT-A-LICENSE ISSUE

Already in the 1930's brothers had been arrested and fined for "peddling without a license." Now, with the encouragement received at the Zurich convention, that issue was going to be settled. As the apostle

Paul had done in ancient Philippi, the brothers were going to 'defend and legally establish the good news.' —Phil. 1:7.

The publishers were again to accept voluntary contributions for literature placed in the field ministry. Immediately, an avalanche of police denunciations in all parts of the country ensued. But the Society was determined to force the issue. What was the outcome?

The High Court in the predominantly Protestant canton of Bern, for example, had long maintained that placing publications on a voluntary contribution basis was subject to peddling ordinances. For decades, this court had ruled against us. Now, in 1948, a brother was again fined SFr. 20.- (\$5, U.S.) by a lower court and the case was appealed to the High Court. This time there was a breakthrough! In its opinion, the Bernese High Court stated:

"Setting aside the fact that no profit was realized, nothing in the conduct of the accused discloses a professional character in his activity. It cannot be established that there was an intention to obtain a profit—either for himself or for the account of Jehovah's witnesses—by means of peddling. The circumstances allow the conclusion that the accused, putting aside any selfish instinct, acted exclusively in a noble and unselfish purpose. The offer of the booklets was not made with the expectation of a compensatory payment which would cover at least the cost of production. The best reward of the accused consisted evidently in the increase of the number of the adepts of the sect and in the favorable reception accorded the evangelization. If it is true that the regulations regarding peddling are intended to protect the public

against those who want to molest them, it would, however, be an exaggeration to hinder religious propaganda from house to house under the cover of the law on the commerce of merchandise and to thus violate the freedom of opinion as guaranteed by the Constitution."

With this acquittal, the Bernese High Court reversed its judicial policy held for 40 years with respect to this question. Though that decision was not binding on other cantons, it proved to be of keen interest to many courts in other cantons.

HARDEST FIGHT IN CANTON OF VAUD

The longest and most persistent conflict on the matter of peddling came up in the French-speaking canton of Vaud. In 1935 an amendment had been made to the law there on peddling. This amendment stated that the offering of merchandise, the price of which, rather than being fixed, was left to the buyer's discretion, was equal to peddling. The state attorney in Lausanne welcomed this as a basis for proceeding against Jehovah's Witnesses.

In 1948 the District Court of Payerne fined a pioneer brother, Jean Siegenthaler, for peddling without a license. The case was appealed to the High Court, which confirmed the decision of the lower court, namely, that the activity of the appellant was exactly what the law aimed at.

In the wake of this ruling, a fight for our rights and freedom ensued that was to last for more than five years. In most cases the lower District Courts protected our right by acquitting us. But the state attorney was very antagonistic and appealed the cases to the High Court, which would reverse the judgment of the

lower court. The Society even brought a case before the highest judicial authority, the Federal Supreme Court. But shamefully, it rejected the appeal.

A COURAGEOUS JUDGE DARES TO DIFFER

Then, on September 3, 1951, a case came up before the District Court of Lausanne. It involved Gilberte Schneeberger. Hopes were low for that case, and the Society had decided to do without the services of a lawyer. Can you imagine how this young pioneer sister felt as she sat alone in the courtroom?

The judge, Mr. Zweifel, came in. After opening the session, he said in a fatherly tone: "Dear Mademoiselle, your case is identical to the one having been unfavorably decided by the Federal Supreme Court. I myself am bound to the law and am unable to change it."

Then our young sister got up on her feet and asked if she might defend herself.

"Of course, Mademoiselle, of course. I am listening." The judge leaned back in his chair and concentrated on the young lady's exposé. She read a memorandum that had been prepared by the Society's Legal Desk.

The arguments impressed Mr. Zweifel very much. He really started *doubting* (that's what his German name, Zweifel, indicates), and he adjourned the pronouncing of judgment. Two days later it came through: Acquittal!

What a surprise! That required real courage on the part of Mr. Zweifel. What is more, he dared to qualify the judgment of both the High Court and the Federal Supreme Court as questionable and unsatisfactory. What would the future have in store?

A SINCERE CLERGYMAN TESTIFIES IN OUR FAVOR

Some time later, another case was dealt with by the District Court of Aigle. There a Protestant minister, among others, was called to the witness stand. He had accepted two books from the publisher and given SFr. 4.- (\$1, U.S.) as a voluntary contribution. This clergyman clearly established in court that the witness of Jehovah had come to him, not for the purpose of selling books, but to discuss religious subjects. The minister definitely viewed this young man as an evangelist and not a peddler. The publisher was acquitted.

On the other hand, Karl Maurer, a faithful pioneer in Payerne, had to spend a day and a night in prison because he was not willing to pay the fine imposed on him.

TOUGH STATE ATTORNEY FINALLY LOSES THE BATTLE

This conflict finally came to a showdown in 1953. The state attorney, intent on winning out over Jehovah's Witnesses and irritated over the fact that lower courts ignored the negative policy of the higher courts, repeatedly appealed a certain case in which the lower courts had acquitted the defendant. So, for the fourth time since 1948, the High Court of the canton of Vaud had to face the same issue.

And now the unexpected happened: The court, composed of a new set of judges, examined the matter from the very bottom and concluded *unanimously* on January 26, 1953, that the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses could *not* be viewed as peddling. The state attorney's appeal was rejected. Finally, the High

Court of the canton of Vaud had found the way to a sound and liberal policy in harmony with the spirit and letter of the law on commerce!

This victory closed an exciting chapter of the history of the work of Jehovah's Witnesses in Switzerland. It testified to the fearless attitude of the publishers and the love of freedom of many judges. Above all, it gave evidence of Jehovah's blessing upon his servants who zealously fought for their God-given rights and for freedom of worship.

NEUTRALITY STILL A CHALLENGE

We have already related to you how the brothers who took a neutral stand during World War II fared. Although Switzerland was not actively engaged in the war and solemnly declared its own neutrality, the country quite inconsistently condemned and imprisoned citizens who claimed this same right for themselves and on religious grounds.

Sentences were milder after the war, but repeated convictions were still the order of the day. In the course of time, however, the public became increasingly interested in the problem of "conscientious objectors," and the press dealt with the matter extensively. Interesting are the remarks of the former Chief of the Swiss Army Staff, Jörg Zumstein, concerning court cases involving persons refusing military service. In February 1984 he was quoted in a paper as saying:

"I have attended such hearings because I wanted to know what happens. The cases involving Jehovah's Witnesses distinguished themselves by a certain level, also on the part of the defendants. These people as well as their relatives appeared in court in

their Sunday suits; they pleaded in a dignified manner for their cause. The judges knew their position and applied the measure of punishment that has become practice, five or six months. Jehovah's Witnesses somehow accept that the State punishes persons not yielding to the demands of the State. But they are not treating the State as a 'sow' the way many others do who are appearing before military courts nowadays."

The drive aimed at finding a solution to the problem of "conscientious objectors" has nevertheless had an effect on the military courts. At present, sentences vary from three to five months of imprisonment, and usually the brothers are dismissed from further military obligation at the time of their conviction. Often, the brothers serve their terms by working in hospitals or homes for elderly people during the day, returning to their prison cell only to spend the night. There continue to be, however, from 60 to 70 court cases before military courts every year, especially involving young brothers taking their neutral stand.

'As fine soldiers of Christ Jesus,' these young brothers 'take their part in suffering evil' for the sake of Christian neutrality. (2 Tim. 2:3) They offer themselves willingly to accomplish the service required by God. It is just as Sister Adele Reichenbach, one of the first anointed Witnesses in the alpine region of Gstaad, once stated. She was making a return visit on the wife of an army officer when the colonel himself answered the door, gave back the book his wife had obtained, and said slightlyly: "Go away and take this trash with you, you refusers of military

service!" Sister Reichenbach replied: "Sir, *we* are accomplishing the service that *you* refuse."

EFFORTS TO REACH "UNASSIGNED TERRITORY"

From 1952 onward, special efforts were made to preach in "unassigned territory." Much of this was made up of remote valleys and farm country, villages with *big* church buildings and with crucifixes prominently situated here and there along the way. The staunch Catholic population living here might have received some tract in the past, but no thorough witness had ever been given in some of these out-of-the-way places.

Some of these people had never heard about Jehovah's Witnesses, and many had never seen a Bible, much less possessed one themselves. This was virgin territory! The publishers took part in this activity with courage and enthusiasm. In many places they were surprised at the success they had. Surprised, too, were the clergy, who did not expect this invasion of what they viewed as their pastures! They warned their flocks, as best they could, not to accept any publications or else to burn these and call the police. In one village about 50 young Catholics went from house to house to collect literature left by the Witnesses. There were threats and even bodily attacks.

In one instance, after a brother had witnessed to a villager, the man quickly phoned the police to file a complaint. However, the reply he got was not what he expected: "Just let these people quietly go on with their work; they know the law better than we do and they know exactly what they may and may

not do." Our fight for freedom of worship had not missed its purpose!

"CHURCH MESSENGERS" HELP AROUSE INTEREST

Sometimes clerical efforts to keep the truth from parishioners boomeranged. This proved true in the case of the following couple: When two young pioneers called on them, the wife listened attentively to their sermon and then invited them in. "This will interest my husband," she said. For about an hour the couple followed with unusual interest the Scriptural explanations given by the pioneers about the establishment of a new system brought into existence by God. They accepted Bible publications, and arrangements were made for another visit. Soon they were deep in Bible study.

After the third visit, the husband disclosed the reason for his initial interest: "You know, I read a short article on Jehovah's Witnesses in the *Church Messenger*. It said that if two young people come to your door, well dressed, tactful, and with the Bible interpretation of their religion, you should *not* listen to them; just tell them you have your own church, and your minister teaches you all these things, and then close the door. But you see, I am a free man and want to examine things myself. That's why I listened to you."

This young couple progressed well, began attending meetings, and soon were sharing in the field service. They also symbolized their dedication to Jehovah. It was the *Church Messenger* that had directed their attention toward the truth!

There were also exceptions among the cler-

gy—those who admitted that their flock needed help and that the visits of Jehovah's Witnesses could benefit them. For example, one minister published the following article in his church paper:

"My dear Jehovah's Witnesses:

"I am really grateful to you, very grateful in fact, that you go so courageously from house to house in our community. Although you are not received everywhere, nevertheless you cause our people to remember once again perhaps—only perhaps—that:

"Besides bread and entertainment, besides joy and mourning, success and failure, besides the battle for existence and business, work and recreation, there are also such things as religion, faith, belief in Jesus Christ. The fact of your coming is a powerful sermon in itself! . . . Perhaps you have received the answer: 'Thank you, we don't need anything, we have our church.' But may I ask you, when the people give you this answer about having their church, then please to ask them further: 'But what do you really believe?'

"You see, that is why I am so grateful to you. Perhaps here and there you will succeed in waking our people up. But there, I will not be unjust, and I admit that I need this call to awaken myself just as much as they do. I admire your courage . . . All respect for such devoted activity; my compliments for your good will! I believe that we all have much to learn from it."

MISSIONARY HOMES ESTABLISHED

The first Gilead-trained missionaries arriving in Switzerland in 1947 were three brothers and a sister from our own branch office who had been invited to

the eighth class and were assigned back to Switzerland. Their training was of great help in the expanding activity at the branch office and in the field. Today, after 40 years, three of that group are still Bethel family members—Fred Borys and Willi Diehl in Switzerland, and Alice Berner in Germany since 1956.

In 1948 other missionaries arrived. Charles Renye and Raymond Leistikow were assigned to circuit work, and they worked hard to learn German so they could care for their assignment. Two couples from the United States, Robert and Elaine Honey and William and Ione Strege, were directed to Geneva, where the first missionary home was opened in 1950. They made great efforts to master the French language in order to work with the local brothers. Franziska Trackova of the 15th class of Gilead is now faithfully serving as a missionary in Lausanne. The combined efforts of these missionaries had a beneficial effect on the congregation in Geneva as seen in the increase there.

Real animation came to the congregation in Lausanne in 1951 when a missionary home for four sisters of the 17th class was established there. These cheerful girls particularly helped the sisters to improve their presentations at the doors by using a theme.

NEW BRANCH OVERSEER

Over the years a number of faithful brothers provided valuable direction for the work in Switzerland as branch overseers. Up until 1953 Franz Zürcher cared for that assignment. Then it was decided that the time had come to put the load of responsibility

on younger shoulders. Filip Hoffmann was sent from Germany. Replaced in 1957 by Jules Feller, Brother Hoffmann is now serving at the branch in Denmark. In 1963 Günter Kulschewski was entrusted with the oversight of the branch in Switzerland. And on November 1, 1965, Willi Diehl was assigned to be branch overseer.

Brother Diehl had begun his full-time service in 1931 at Bethel in Bern, running a job press. Fifteen years later he was invited to attend Gilead School. After he married, he and his wife pioneered together for two years. He also served as circuit and district overseer. In 1964 he was invited to attend Gilead again, along with his wife, to benefit from a more extensive course. All of this provided excellent background for his work as branch overseer.

As is true of all the other branches of the Society, Switzerland has had a Branch Committee since 1976. Willi Diehl is the coordinator, and the other members are Armin Beetschen, Jean-Jules Guilloud, Lars Johansson, and Hans Klenk.

THE CANTON OF TICINO RECEIVES ATTENTION

In the sunny south of Switzerland between the Alps and the border of Italy is the canton of Ticino. Here Italian is spoken, and the inhabitants are almost exclusively of the Catholic faith. It was not easy for the Kingdom message to get a foothold here, but the Society arranged to care for what little interest could be found. Little did any of the brothers realize what a rich harvest would be gathered!

Andreas Monstein, who was of German-Swiss origin but who spoke Italian, had been directed to

Lugano in 1944. He worked the territory, took care of some small groups of interested persons, and held public lectures. It was a small beginning but not to be despised.—Zech. 4:10.

In the course of time, other pioneers also helped to sow the seed of truth in various parts of Ticino. It was hard work; the people were totally ignorant of the Bible and many were ensnared by superstition and fear of the clergy. But the little band of publishers showed endurance, and finally help arrived from an unexpected source.

MISSIONARIES FROM ITALY

When a number of Gilead-trained missionaries were suddenly compelled to leave Italy, they took up residence in Ticino. In time, most of these missionaries were able to return to Italy or left for other reasons, but in the meantime the groundwork was laid for the formation of several congregations. A missionary who will be long remembered is Angelo Fraese. He stayed at the missionary home in Lugano for about 20 years and was sometimes jokingly called "the angel of the congregation in Lugano"!

Many years have passed since the first witnessing was done in Ticino, and much more preaching has been done. With what results? Today there are 11 thriving congregations comprised of about 950 publishers. In Lugano alone there are four active congregations, and the end is not yet!

PREACHING TO "GUEST WORKERS"

A great economic boom developed in Switzerland after the war. The Swiss working force occupied what were viewed as the best positions, but who



**Willi Diehl,
coordinator of
the Branch
Committee, with
his wife Marthe**

would do the lowly jobs? In war-torn countries there were plenty of willing hands, so a wave of immigration started. At the end of 1968, foreign residents numbered 933,000, making up 15 percent of the total population. The majority of these "guest workers" came from Italy. As our brothers carried on their ministry, they soon encountered Italians all over the country. Many among them showed interest in the truth.

Typical is this experience of Rudolf Wiederkehr. He met an Italian worker in an old house in Hunzenschwil. Neither of the two men knew much of the other's language, so what could be done? Our brother just left a copy of the Italian *Watchtower* with him. In spite of the language problem, Brother Wiederkehr returned. When the Italian saw him, he quickly went and brought out that copy of *La Torre di Guardia*, exclaiming with beaming eyes: "*Questo è la verità!*" ("This is the truth!") Encouraged by this reaction, the brother procured three "*Let God Be True*" books in Italian and started a study with the

man, Signor Pelagatti, his wife, and their 12-year-old son Gianni. The family read in the Italian books, whereas Brother Wiederkehr followed in his German edition. When words were lacking, gestures were used profusely! Sometimes, the young boy, who was learning German in school, served as translator.

The study with the Pelagatti family was joined by the older daughter and her husband, Signor Trombi. All five progressed well. By the end of the book, the whole family spontaneously declared their withdrawal from the Catholic Church and symbolized their dedication to Jehovah. As zealous Witnesses they became instrumental in helping many more Italian families to learn the truth. At the present time, the elder Brother Pelagatti is sleeping in death, but Gianni and his family still continue as faithful Witnesses in the Italian congregation of Reinach, and the Trombi family is active in the vicinity of Parma, Italy. And how does Brother Wiederkehr feel? "You cannot imagine the joy I still have about this experience!" he exclaims.

INFORMAL WITNESSING WITH FAR-REACHING RESULTS

In Lucerne, Irène Frenzel (who pioneered for many years in this area) mentioned casually to her Italian hairdresser that she was going to the United States to attend the 1953 convention of Jehovah's Witnesses. The hairdresser had never heard of Jehovah's Witnesses and inquired what it was all about. A discussion after work hours was agreed upon, and with the help of an Italian-speaking sister, a study was started.

The hairdresser, Bruno Quilici, was very eager to

learn, but at the same time he stood up for his Catholic beliefs. Heated discussions raged for and against hellfire. "We were taught there *is* a hell!" he repeatedly shouted, pounding his fist on the table. But finally the Bible won out over false doctrine, and Mr. Quilici became so engrossed in the Bible that he wanted to study twice a week. During all this time he still sang in church. In time, however, he became free of the shackles of false worship and dedicated himself to the God of truth, Jehovah. But listen as he himself relates the results of his endeavors:

"First, I was very happy that my wife, of German-Swiss origin, accepted the truth as well. Thus we were able to raise our two children according to Bible principles. When we moved into the canton of Aargau, I found myself among the very first Italian publishers in that region and felt called upon to preach far and wide among all the Italian workers. My efforts were blessed as numerous families accepted the truth, and when I think of the seven Italian-speaking congregations that resulted in the course of time, I really thank Jehovah for the joy this brings to my heart."

Was Brother Quilici content with the results in his immediate neighborhood? No. He also thought of his relatives in Italy. He says: "As soon as I could, I went to Italy in order to stir up interest among my family. It was not in vain. Two of my fleshly sisters and their families became the first Witnesses in the vicinity of Lucca. And today, there are five thriving congregations established there."

In the meantime, Brother Quilici has retired from secular work and has joined his daughter in regular

pioneer service. His son and daughter-in-law are also serving Jehovah full-time.

INCREDIBLY RAPID GROWTH

To the Swiss publishers the quick response and rapid growth among the Italians came as a surprise. They were used to studies that dragged on for years with the Swiss—but not so with the Italians! When they understood a point of Bible teaching, they put it into practice right away. We did not need to invite them twice before they came to a meeting, and they rarely came alone. Relatives and friends were brought along, and there was no fear of what the neighbors might think. Though some have had to overcome opposition from family members, their being away from home and somewhat isolated among the Swiss population contributed much to the rapid growth of the Kingdom seeds sown in their receptive hearts.

According to Arturo Leveris, there were nine Italian congregations and a number of small groups to be visited when he started out in Italian circuit work in the early 1960's. He explains: "Soon Italian congregations mushroomed all over the country. This means that even in German- or French-speaking regions Italian congregations were formed to care for the interest among their nationals." In time, five Italian circuits were formed, and well-attended circuit assemblies gave even more impetus to the work among the Italians.

FINE QUALITIES OF ELDERS

Family ties are closely knit among the Italians. Exceeding love for their children is typical, but they

also have great respect for their aging parents and usually take good care of them. These tender feelings apparently help them to become good elders in the congregation, the large Christian family. The kind and considerate, yet firm, attitude of the elders has contributed immeasurably to the expansion in the Italian field.

They set a good example by regularly bringing the entire family to the meetings, thus applying the counsel in Hebrews 10:25 and Deuteronomy 31:12. This good habit is being imitated by newcomers, who also bring their children. At times, there may be a bit of restlessness and crying from the little ones not yet able to grasp the things taught at the Kingdom Hall. But it is better to have them there than to leave them at home. In time they learn, and grow in wisdom.

Often the halls are filled to capacity and the air gets unpleasantly hot. But the brothers patiently endure until a solution to the problem is found. Many a French and German congregation has had to look for a bigger hall, not for their own sake, but for the sake of the Italian congregation using the same hall.

Typical of this situation is the case of the congregation in Neuchâtel. There used to be a French and a German congregation in this town. Later an Italian and a Spanish were added, and then the first Portuguese congregation in our country was established there. So the increase in the foreign-language field compelled the brothers to look for a more adequate meeting place. They bought a flat in a building and divided it into two Kingdom Halls; these are now shared by five congregations!

AFTER THE ITALIANS, THE SPANISH

Another group of "guest workers," not nearly as numerous as the Italians, are the Spanish. Alert publishers have helped many of these to become acquainted with the Kingdom message, as illustrated by what Hans Bodenmann, Sr., from Basel relates:

"One day, returning from an unfruitful call, I noticed two young men at the roadside, one of them reading in a book that appeared to be a Bible. I greeted them and found they were Spanish. The book was indeed the Bible. With some difficulty, I made them understand that I would return the next evening to the same spot with a person speaking Spanish.

"When Brother Siegenthaler, who had lived in Spain for many years, accompanied me the next evening, we found four Spanish men waiting. Although they had never met Jehovah's Witnesses before, they immediately agreed to meet once a week for Bible study in a private home.

"At the first meeting six persons were present, then eight. We showed them one of the Society's films, which left an excellent impression. In the first year there were many ups and downs. Some students stopped attending, others returned to Spain, but new ones took their places. I was happy to see Juan Pérez, one of the men first spoken to by the roadside, as well as his wife become very active publishers."

Finally, in December 1969 the Spanish study group was organized into a congregation, *Basel-española*, the second Spanish congregation in Swit-

zerland. (The first had been founded in Lucerne in 1965.) Juan Pérez became the congregation overseer. Then in May 1970 he and his wife returned to Spain to engage in special pioneer work.

More Spanish congregations were organized, and from 1972 onward they formed their own circuit. Just 185 attended their first circuit assembly, but since then the circuit has grown to 16 congregations, with nearly 1,200 publishers.

In connection with the Italian and Spanish fields in our country, we appreciate having brothers who can speak those languages in addition to another tongue commonly used in Switzerland. For instance, Max Wörnhard, of German-Swiss descent and very gifted in languages, has a family to care for, but he also serves part-time at the branch office and as district overseer for the Italian and Spanish circuits.

SOCIETY'S FILMS APPRECIATED

It was not only the Spanish "guest workers" who were benefited by seeing projections of the Society's motion pictures. We all were enthusiastic about them. Since many brothers were associated with small congregations in the rurals, they found it difficult to envision the scope of Jehovah's work worldwide. Therefore the various films showing brothers of many races and nationalities impressed them, as well as the public, very much. What they saw was not a small, insignificant group but a world-embracing organization.

There were many favorable comments about the scenes showing our black brothers engaged in Kingdom service. One lady was concerned when she saw

that African baptismal candidates were immersed fully dressed. She worried that they might catch a cold when walking around in their wet clothing afterward. Ah, but the temperature in Africa is not the same as in Switzerland!

These films have been an excellent means to get people to step into Kingdom Halls and become eye-witnesses of the accomplishment of Jesus' words: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations."—Matt. 24:14.

PIONEERS PAVE THE WAY IN LIECHTENSTEIN

The last we told you about Liechtenstein was regarding the distribution of the booklet *Fascism or Freedom*. What happened in the following years there in pretty Liechtenstein?

A pioneer sister, Helen Knechtli, was assigned to work there in 1956. She stayed in Buchs, on the Swiss side of the river Rhine, and daily walked across the bridge into Liechtenstein. Preaching was done from house to house with the Bible only, but when interest was found, publications were left on return visits. Sister Knechtli was a very friendly and patient person, and these qualities won a favorable response from many. She was able to establish several home Bible studies. Finally, the truth was taking a foothold in the *Ländle*!

About two years later, Blanka Hertenstein, who had attended Gilead School, was transferred from Austria to Switzerland and assigned to work in Liechtenstein. She organized her activity so adroitly that it took the police a year and a half of searching

—in a country of only 62 sq mi (160 sq km)—until they finally encountered her! Applying Christ's counsel to "prove yourselves cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves," Sister Hertenstein visited a few persons in one territory and then left for another. (Matt. 10:16) Enjoying the advantages of a car put at her disposal by generous brothers, she started in the morning at one end of the country and preached in village after village until she finished her day at the other end. So each time the police were called and came looking for her, Blanka had disappeared as if swallowed up by the earth!

The policemen forbade her to go from door to door, but the sister had already found a number of persons sincerely interested in the truth, and she went on caring for them. The police could not prohibit such private visits.

THE LÄNDLE BEGINS TO YIELD FRUIT

In 1961 the first sister from Liechtenstein was baptized at a convention in Hamburg. A year later, there were seven Kingdom publishers, and a weekly *Watchtower* Study was being held in a private home.

Though the Catholic Church had a tight grip on the population in those years and knew how to use state power cleverly in proceeding against Jehovah's Witnesses, the Kingdom work moved ahead. In 1965, 11 publishers were active. Some of them later moved away, and two brothers who had come from Germany to serve where the need was greater had to leave the country. Other publishers became inactive. But the light of truth kept shining in Liechtenstein.

AWAKE! ARTICLE BREAKS DOWN PREJUDICE

The August 8, 1966, issue of *Awake!* (May 22, 1966, in English), carried an appealing article on the subject "Liechtenstein—A Jewel in the Alps." This issue was distributed throughout the country, and publishers from both Switzerland and Liechtenstein were thrilled to share in this special campaign.

The article was appreciated very much. People were approachable and gladly accepted a copy. They liked the idea that all over the world the report on their country would be read, by persons speaking 26 different languages (the number of languages in which *Awake!* was then printed). The Society received a letter from the press service of the government expressing thanks for the fine article.

After this campaign, the brothers felt that prejudice against the work of Jehovah's Witnesses decreased. Consequently, since 1966 the preaching work has met with less difficulty than before.

A FRIEND WORKING IN THE CASTLE

When you approach Liechtenstein's capital, you notice from afar the castle towering above the neat houses of Vaduz. No, it is not just a vestige of centuries gone by but the actual residence of the reigning prince. In fact, the Principality of Liechtenstein is a constitutional hereditary monarchy on a democratic and parliamentary basis.

Now it so happened that Amalija, a young woman from Yugoslavia who was interested in Bible truth, found employment in the household of the prince. She knew Jehovah's Witnesses from her homeland and had acquired some knowledge of God's Word. As



The castle, landmark of Liechtenstein

is customary, she was expected to attend prayers in the castle chapel, but because of what she had learned from the Bible, she declined to do so. "Her Highness will be displeased if you do not join us in the chapel," her superior said. "But *God* will be displeased with me if I do," she replied. And so she was left in peace.

Yet Amalija had a problem that was made worse because of the language barrier: How could she get in contact with Jehovah's Witnesses? She took the book *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* and went to the nearby railway station in Buchs, Switzerland. Showing the book to passersby, she tried with the help of many gestures to find out where people distributing such literature could be found.

But no one understood her. Disappointed, she wrote to her home country for help, and finally through the branch offices she was put in contact with the brothers.

Being a good and reliable worker, this young woman was greatly appreciated among the personnel in the princely household. On this account, in 1969 she was permitted to go to the "Peace on Earth" International Assembly in Nürnberg, where she attended the Yugoslavian sessions with great enthusiasm. She was one of the 5,095 persons baptized on that occasion.

A CONGREGATION ESTABLISHED

Since 1967, the small band of Kingdom proclaimers in Liechtenstein has been supported by a special pioneer couple, Oskar and Anni Hoffmann. They have faithfully and perseveringly plowed the field and sowed seeds of Kingdom truth; they have cultivated and cared for the young growing plants. True, the crop is not overwhelming, but a congregation of about 45 active Witnesses is now established in Schaan and meets in an attractive Kingdom Hall. Some publishers from Switzerland assist the congregation by filling the need for capable elders.

Summing up the report on the work in the Principality of Liechtenstein, Brother Hoffmann says: "We have put up with clergy resistance and police interference. Those days are gone. Now we have to put up with materialistic thinking and indifference toward spiritual matters, but our faithful brothers in Liechtenstein are determined to meet this challenge too." They certainly will do it, with Jehovah's help.

ON THE RADIO—A RARE OPPORTUNITY

Since the Protestant and Catholic Churches are the main religions in Switzerland, smaller denominations have rarely been heard over the radio. But we had an opportunity in 1956.

Several dissident religious movements had been invited for a radio discussion with representatives of the Evangelical Reformed Church, but we were the only ones who accepted the invitation. The church was represented by a professor of theology of the University of Bern, a high school master, and a female teacher; the Society delegated Alfred Rütimann and Fred Borys of the branch staff. The discussion was opened by their short report on Jehovah's Witnesses, followed by a brief talk by the professor. Then an open debate of various subjects ensued.

This program was broadcast on a Saturday evening, hence at a very favorable time. It brought a spontaneous and unequivocal response in favor of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the country. Apparently it was not only our brothers who were attentive and enthusiastic listeners. Dozens of letters addressed to the branch office expressed commendation for the manner in which Jehovah's Witnesses defended themselves. Many persons were disgusted with the mocking attitude of the church representatives. Most impressive was the fact that during the entire discussion our brothers continually cited the Bible in support, whereas the church representatives did not use it, not even once.

"Hats off to Jehovah's Witnesses," exclaimed a

man phoning the branch office right after the broadcast. Another one sent a copy of his withdrawal from the church as a consequence of what he had heard. He wrote: "Finally I found what I have been looking for."

The newspaper *Oberländer Tagblatt* summed it up this way: "Discussions on Bible interpretation require of the participants a great deal of their own genuine and practical Christianity and of their human ability to deal with dissidents. The representatives of the Evangelical Reformed Church have not shown themselves capable of navigating this reef. We regret to say that if we had to decide for one or the other party in the debate, we would rather have decided in favor of the representatives of the sect, Jehovah's Witnesses."

BROADCAST BY THE FRENCH RADIO STATION

Naturally, our French-speaking brothers were very anxious to have a good witness given over the radio in their language too. It came about on Sunday evening, December 20, 1970. A few weeks previously, the office of Radio Sottens, the French-speaking Swiss radio station, had contacted André Eiselé, overseer of the congregation of Prilly. In a series of broadcasts dealing with various social and religious groups in the country, Jehovah's Witnesses were also to be interviewed.

Brother Eiselé, together with two other brothers and a sister, took part in the discussion. Questions by the moderator about our relationship with God, with our fellowman, and with human society in general were answered. Since the time was shortly before

Christmas, the importance of pure worship untainted by pagan ideas and customs was stressed.

"Only two days after this discussion, I was contacted again," relates Brother Eiselé. "The moderator proposed another broadcast dealing with personal impressions and inner conflicts resulting from a Christian's neutral position due to his observance of Bible principles. I accepted, and the broadcast took place on Friday, January 8, 1971, from 10:00 to 10:35 p.m." Many appreciative comments were made, especially by sisters whose husbands were against the truth. These men gained a better impression of Jehovah's Witnesses and no longer resisted so categorically their wives' attending meetings or engaging in the Christian ministry.

ON TELEVISION TOO

Would the Swiss Television Society ever muster enough liberality to present Jehovah's Witnesses on the screen? At our international assembly in 1965 in Basel we saw the breakthrough. Included in the daily news were short but favorable reports on this convention. Since then, interviews or short reports about district conventions have been televised both on the German and the French channels. Though lasting for only a few minutes, these reports have aroused the interest of many persons.

The best and most detailed coverage of Jehovah's Witnesses on television was on the Italian channel on January 26, 1979. It lasted for 40 minutes and presented many aspects of our Christian way of life. Spectators were introduced to the family Bible study of Brother Soldati in Bellinzona; they were taken to a convention in Milan, Italy, and were

shown the activities of our organization on a visit to the Society's branch office and printery in Thun. An interesting feature was the interview with Teresa Medici of Lugano, a sister then 98 years old who had been baptized at the age of 80 and was still speaking up courageously for her convictions. This dear sister has since died at the age of 102, firmly looking forward to the fulfillment of Christ's resurrection promises.—John 5:28, 29.

BIGGEST GATHERING EVER

The biggest gathering ever held in Switzerland was the 1965 "Word of Truth" Assembly, an international one, in Basel, a city of about 200,000 inhabitants. The convention was to include thousands of brothers from southern Germany as well as from France and other European countries. Between 30,000 and 40,000 visitors were expected. According to Swiss standards, this was a *giant* assembly, and to prepare for it was a challenge.

"Where are we going to lodge so many delegates?" was the first question popping up in my mind," reminisces Hans Klenk, the Swiss district overseer who, together with Karl Hägele, a district overseer from Germany, was entrusted with the organization.

The program was to be held in five languages: German, French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. Yes, this was a big event for about 2,000 brothers from Spain and Portugal who, in spite of the fact that the work in their lands was still under ban, hoped to get permission to travel to Switzerland. Unfortunately, some of them did not make it because officials learned that they planned to attend a Christian assembly and so denied them passports.

At the kickoff meeting in Basel, well in advance of the convention date, about 800 publishers, including some from nearby Germany, received instructions on how to locate accommodations in hotels, school dormitories, camping areas, and private quarters in the city and in surrounding towns and villages. They devoted 18,000 hours to this activity. Their love for the brothers and their enthusiasm helped them to tackle the task, and by the time the delegates poured in, not a single one had to sleep under the starry heavens!

MARVELING AT OUR GOODWILL

A lot of construction work was required on the site, a large sports field. Five language sections necessitated five platforms as well as all the other installations. Seventy-seven brothers and sisters contributed their time, muscle, and know-how. For example, Frieda Hemmig was digging ditches for the installation of extra rest rooms on the day she was 65 years old. She still thinks of it as a privilege to have had a share in those labors of love for "the whole association of brothers."—1 Pet. 2:17.

The most surprised man on the spot was the chief of the city fire department. He exclaimed: "How do you do that? Here you have an abundance of unpaid workers, and in town there is an acute shortage of labor in spite of high salary offers."

One of the circuit overseers, Brother Rohleder of Germany, who was responsible for the Volunteer Desk, explained by citing the example of a brother from Australia who had traveled four weeks to reach the convention city. Upon arrival in Basel, he went

straight to the Volunteer Desk to offer his services as a plumber. The fire chief shook his head: "It's surely remarkable. I just can't believe it! Nobody nowadays is doing anything without being paid for it." Of course, he did not know from experience what Jehovah's spirit can accomplish through those who let themselves be used by God.

On the final day of the assembly, July 18, 1965, a total of 36,785 persons attended the public lecture, "World Government on the Shoulder of the Prince of Peace," delivered by Brother Knorr. The convention itself had been a demonstration of how Jehovah's Witnesses have already realized unity and peace among themselves. The attendance was as follows: 29,827 in the German section; 3,385 in the French; 1,340 in the Italian; 1,886 in the Spanish, and 347 in the Portuguese section.

NEED FOR NEW BRANCH BUILDING

When Brother Knorr visited in 1968, an important decision was reached. The president himself broke the news at a special meeting in Bern on May 29: The branch is to get a new Bethel home and factory building! The need for better facilities was urgent, and the brothers were overjoyed at this news. It reflected the blessing Jehovah had bestowed upon their efforts. A suitable piece of land was found in Thun, about 20 miles (32 km) from the old Bethel building in Bern. This location was in a beautiful setting, not far from Lake of Thun and with a magnificent view of the Alps. The Bethel family was thrilled!

On February 11, 1969, excavation work began, and at the end of March they were pouring the concrete. After that, construction work moved ahead rapidly. The building was going to be about twice as large as the old one. It was to have five floors, 53 bedrooms for the family, and sufficient space for the factory, storage rooms, and offices. Much of the work in the interior, such as floor-covering and woodworking, was done by brothers. To reinforce the main floor, 80 tons of iron rods were used, 50 tons of which went into the concrete floor of the factory alone. Years later it proved to be providential that the factory floor was constructed so solidly.

NEW ROTARY PRESS AS WELL

In view of the increasing need for publications, a second printing press was to be installed in the new factory. It was a 35-ton M.A.N. rotary press, which Milan Miller from Brooklyn helped us to set up. Of course, there was also the old rotary press that the Society had purchased in 1924. For many years Reinhard Pletscher worked on it. He cared for it to the point of using some of his free time to clean and polish "his" machine. This attachment caused some of the Bethel family to call the black press "Reinhard's black wife"! Sister Pletscher did not mind that; she laughed about it with the rest of the family. However, because of this good maintenance and a thorough overhauling, the machine lasted for many years after it was moved to Thun. It even survived Brother Pletscher, who finished his earthly course in 1973.

APPRECIATION FOR THE NEW FACILITIES

At the dedication of the building on May 16, 1970, Brother Knorr recalled the important role buildings had played in ancient times with respect to the worship of Jehovah: the tabernacle in ancient Israel and the magnificent temple built by Solomon. He said: "This new Bethel Home, though dedicated to true worship, would be of no value at all if the people making use of the building would not wholeheartedly labor in the interest of Jehovah's work on earth."

Not only was the Bethel family deeply thankful for their new home and working place, but more than 4,000 other brothers and interested persons availed themselves of the opportunity to visit the new Bethel on two open-house weekends in October of the same year. "We were very impressed with the beautiful building and spacious factory," said a sister, "and to think that from this place not only we publishers in Switzerland but brothers in many foreign lands would get spiritual food made us very happy."

Typical of the lively interest and the spirit of generosity when it came to meeting the financial responsibilities in connection with this new construction was the following letter from a young sister:

"Dear Brothers,

"I have just finished my apprenticeship. In recognition of my good accomplishment, I was awarded a prize in the form of a certain sum of money, which made me very glad. Since I can see no better use for this money than to put it at your disposal for the new Bethel building in Thun, please find enclosed the sum of SFr. 80.— [\$20, U.S.].

"United with you in Jehovah's service, I send heartfelt love and greetings.

Your sister,
Marie-Louise."

PERSEVERANCE—A REQUIREMENT

In our country, usually people do not come into the truth immediately when they have a Bible study. We must show much patience and perseverance. Experiences prove that most Bible studies can be started only after people gain confidence in the publisher. They must be convinced that we are sincerely interested in their personal welfare. Illustrating this point, Grete Schmidt, a longtime special pioneer, relates this experience:

"Some years ago, my husband and I came in contact with a friendly Czech family living in Lucerne. The wife was a teacher and her husband a top-ranking sportsman in rowing. Both had been raised as atheists, but they nevertheless enjoyed discussions. But when the subject of God or the Bible was mentioned, they just smiled. . . . Finally we stopped visiting them."

Two or three years passed. Then an article appeared in *The Watchtower* of October 15, 1976 (July 15, 1976, in English), about a brother who had won a gold medal as a runner at the Olympic games in Tokyo. "When I read this article," Sister Schmidt continues, "I remembered the Czech couple, because the husband had won a silver medal at the same Olympic games. So I decided to visit the family again with this magazine. First they talked about sports and I merely listened. On further visits I spoke again and again about the Bible."

How did the couple react? "Please excuse us, Mrs. Schmidt. You have forgotten that we are atheists."

"Nevertheless, I continued visiting this nice family. Somehow I felt that something was not quite in order. Finally I noticed that they had family problems. They were already speaking of divorce."

The sister showed them from the Bible how to overcome such problems. Astonished at the practical counsel contained in the Bible, the couple now agreed to a Bible study. More and more their marriage was strengthened. Eventually they accepted the truth and were immersed in the spring of 1979. How does Brother Jiri Lundák now feel?

"Previously I just could not tolerate hearing the words 'holy,' 'angel,' and similar terms; it hurt my ears. I did not want to hear anything about meetings either. But now everything is changed. My free time belongs to God and my family. Also, as regards friends, we have made changes. Now I know how important the meetings are. I learned to assume the responsibility of being a father, and we have a happy family life. Again I want to thank Jehovah that we were permitted to learn how to pray and that he offered us his hand before we searched for him." Truly, perseverance does bring good results.

REMARKABLY, MANY BAPTISMAL CANDIDATES ARE YOUNG

In 1975 an all-time peak of 1,138 persons presented themselves for baptism at our circuit assemblies and district conventions held in four languages. In the following years the number declined, but among the yearly average of about 560 baptismal candi-

dates, there are, remarkably, many young people. Some of them have a hard struggle to get free from family traditions, but it is faith strengthening to observe their earnestness. As an example, listen to the story of one young man:

"I was having a refreshment in a restaurant when a German tourist asked me if the seat next to mine was free. Upon my answer in the affirmative, the lady sat down, and soon we were engaged in conversation. She told me that she had a lot to do with young people, as she worked at the University of Constance, Germany. She pointed out to me how important it was to show young people the best way of life. I could only agree, as I could see for myself how many youths suffered from alcohol and drugs. Finally she told me of an interesting book for young people entitled *Your Youth—Getting the Best out of It*. She was sorry not to have it with her, but she promised to bring it to me. She really did, but as I was very busy, she just left the book and said she had to go back to Germany now, but someone else would come to discuss the book with me.

"I was contacted by a brother, and soon I was not only studying but also attending every meeting. My love for Jehovah deepened. My life had a purpose, and I suddenly had many new friends. I recognized the necessity of getting out of 'Babylon the Great.' In February 1979 I decided to leave the church. Since I was away from home, nobody hindered me from carrying out this decision.

"But alas, when I informed my parents, their reaction was fierce! They phoned and asked me if I had gone crazy. They tried everything to make me change my mind. I kindly explained that I had

recognized the necessity of serving the one true God and that I would stick to my point of view. Next day my father arrived and said: 'You are coming home with me, you rascal!' Can you sense how I felt?"

How did things turn out for our young friend? He had to accompany his father to the priest, who tried to talk him out of his decision but was not willing to discuss any texts from the Bible. Then the parents decided to send him to a Catholic college. How did he feel about that?

"I was very depressed, but I placed my confidence in Jehovah according to Solomon's words: 'Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight.' (Prov. 3:5, 6) In the beginning, it was very hard. Every Sunday I had to go to church, but I sat there and prayed to Jehovah while the others were participating in their worship. I had many opportunities to give a witness, and when it was meeting time, I engaged in personal study at the college. After about three months the priests admitted that it was useless to continue forcing me to attend church. Later, I was allowed to leave the college for the whole day on Sunday. Can you guess where I went?"

At one of several interviews with the abbot, the young man offered him the magazines. In turn, the abbot invited him to speak to three classes of pupils on the subject of Jehovah's Witnesses. Thus he was able to witness to 90 pupils and place literature with them. Two classes had so many questions on the Bible that he was allowed two hours to answer them.

Our young brother concludes his story this way: "At the end of the year my superiors even thanked

me and said they had never had such a diligent pupil. Today I have the joy of living a life that has a purpose, and this Jehovah gave me through his earthly organization. In the summer of 1980, I was baptized at the district convention in Zurich, and now I am experiencing many joys serving as a pioneer. I thank Jehovah for his mercy and loving-kindness!"

NEW BETHEL NEEDS ADDITION

After only a few years of activity in our new Bethel building, it became evident that we needed more space because of the increase in production. We now printed magazines in six languages, with a peak output of 31 million in 1975. Because the work of Jehovah's Witnesses had been legally recognized in Spain in 1970, the publishers required great quantities of Spanish magazines as they engaged more and more in the regular features of field service. It was our privilege to keep them supplied. The same was true for Portugal when the work received official recognition in December 1974. Already we had been printing magazines in French, German, English, and Italian. From 1981 onward, Greek and Turkish were added to the list, bringing the total to 15 editions per month in eight languages. Later on, the quarterly edition of the Turkish *Awake!* was added.

"All of this required space," explains Lars Johanson, presently factory overseer. "So we saw fit to use a section of the garden in order to add a building to our Bethel complex. It was to comprise a large storage room for paper and ample space for a better equipped Shipping Department. We also envisaged the need for more living quarters, so the new



Bethel home, office, and printery at Thun

structure was to provide rooms for 12 more persons." In February 1978 this addition was dedicated.

NEW PRINTING METHODS INTRODUCED

The apostle Paul's statement that "the scene of this world is changing" is certainly true of the old system of things on this earth, but it might also be applied with respect to printing methods! (1 Cor. 7:31) We had heard of the modern methods introduced in the Society's printeries in the United States and elsewhere in order to keep pace with worldwide developments, and we wondered when it would be our turn.

Well, preparations began in the winter of 1980-81. Step-by-step a new Graphics Department was set up in the additional Bethel structure. First, *Our King-*

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dom Ministry was produced in four languages by phototypesetting, and in July we started printing the Greek editions of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* on our newly acquired flatbed offset press.

This was followed by the arrival of the first converted rotary offset press from Brooklyn in June 1982. To make room for it, our "old battleship" rotary press bought in 1924 was dismantled and scrapped. It had printed untold millions of magazines during its 58 years in operation!

Then we got news from Brooklyn that a second converted rotary offset press was allotted to the branch in Switzerland. How glad we were that at the construction of our branch in Thun the floor of the factory had been so solidly made! This press arrived in December 1983. Our factory was now well equipped to produce magazines in eight languages for distribution or personal use by our brothers in nearly 100 different countries.

THEY OFFER THEMSELVES WILLINGLY

We are happy to see that the pioneer spirit sweeping through Jehovah's visible organization has also reached a number of our brothers and sisters in Switzerland. For many years the number of pioneers in our country was one of our weak points, but since 1980 the number of regular pioneers has risen from 101 to a peak of 271, besides 64 special pioneers (including 2 in Liechtenstein and 3 missionaries in Switzerland). It is our hope that many more will be moved to take hold of this service during the reduced time that is left.—1 Cor. 7:29.

That many more would love to be in this full-time service but cannot is seen from the increasing

numbers who avail themselves of the opportunity to serve as auxiliary pioneers. In May of 1986 a peak of 1,117 publishers shared in this service, to compare with 361 in 1980. This, we feel, is a remarkable step forward in our field.

The congregation of Dittingen provides an illustration of the extent to which the positive attitude of elders contributes to this fruitful development. Samuel Hurni presented 15 auxiliary pioneers on the stage at the 1985 fall circuit assembly in Basel. He explained: "Our congregation consists of 26 baptized publishers, and 57 percent of these, that is 15, enjoyed auxiliary pioneering either in May or in September, or both." He explained that the elders agreed among themselves to take the lead in this activity. Then they approached other members of the congregation, saying: "The elders will be auxiliary pioneers in May. Would you like to try it along with us?" Some of the publishers were so pleased that the elders considered them capable of this service that they enthusiastically gave it a try. This effort shared in common has been a great success and a boon to the whole congregation. All were strengthened and elated by the joyous spirit of these pioneers.—Ps. 110:3.

PRESERVING UNITY IN SPITE OF DIVERSITY

An outstanding feature of the organization of Jehovah's people in Switzerland is the diversity of language and background. Preserving unity and advancing *together* is therefore one of the main objectives pursued by the Branch Committee.

The formation of foreign-language congregations

calls for much effort. Caring for them involves administrative work such as correspondence with congregations and circuit overseers, analyzing reports, coordinating and organizing assemblies, dispatching informative circular letters, providing field service instruction and publications, and much more, *all in four languages*—German, French, Italian, and Spanish. Since not all brothers at the branch office speak these languages, a great deal of translation work is required.

Out in the field the increasing foreign population became a challenge to the publishers. Would they bypass those doors with the excuse that communication with these people was impossible? Or would they at least find out their origin and procure a publication in their language? Some alert publishers did more than that. They learned a new language in order to help these people.—1 Tim. 2:4.

Thus, apart from the already-mentioned language groups, there are also Yugoslavian, Portuguese, Greek, and Turkish people, as well as Tamil and Vietnamese refugees, that are being witnessed to, and a number of these are showing genuine interest or have already taken their stand on Jehovah's side. Yes, with people from many more lands living within the borders of Switzerland, we feel as though we have a missionary field at our doorstep!

THE BETHEL FAMILY, TOO, REFLECTS DIVERSITY

Our Bethel family includes about 65 members. Because the branch in Switzerland is one of the oldest, we have staff members from early times who have been like pillars on our team. Visitors are often

impressed by the relatively large number of long-time workers. We would like to present to you the 12 brothers and sisters above 65 years of age. (See page 215.) They have a combined Bethel service record of 552 years, or an average of 46 years each.

All of these are still working zealously. As a few examples, there are Lydia Wiedenmann, 87, who sets the tables every day; Jules Feller, 86, who works at the reception desk; Arnold Rohrer, 86, who cares for our many bicycles; Paul Obrist, 81, who works in the office; Willi Diehl, 75, who serves as coordinator of the Branch Committee.

Missing from the picture are two dear brothers who have recently finished their earthly course: David Wiedenmann, at age 82, having worked as a member of the Branch Committee up to his last breath, leaving us an example of simplicity and contentment; and Gottfried Feuz, at age 88, who spent 63 years in full-time service. In his later years, he was a conscientious coworker in the Subscription Department and will long be remembered for his kindness.

Surely it may be said of these brothers and sisters: "Gray-headedness is a crown of beauty when it is found in the way of righteousness." (Prov. 16:31) Their extensive experience makes them precious to the younger members of the family. Diversity of age is certainly no obstacle to unity; neither is diversity of language. Right in Bethel we have representatives of three of the official languages. This is strikingly apparent during the daily text discussion and the family *Watchtower* Study when comments in three languages are heard.

DEVELOPMENTS AT BETHEL

As most of Jehovah's Witnesses living in this 20th century realize, technical progress in recent years has been overwhelming. Without a doubt, Jehovah has seen to it that such modern equipment would be made available for use in carrying out the preaching of "this good news of the kingdom . . . in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations," and this within the lifetime of just one generation. —Matt. 24:14, 34.

With this in mind, it is clear why the Society is making the best possible use of computerization. The branch in Switzerland became equipped with MEPS (Multilanguage Electronic Phototypesetting System) in July 1983, and we keep learning how to streamline our work with the help of this versatile system. In particular, the great amount of work in connection with our Subscription Department has been reduced to a relatively simple activity on a few Personal Computers. In the Shipping Department, too, the computer has simplified the work.

On the other hand, much of the printing we used to do for other branches has been taken over by these as they themselves became equipped with new buildings and rotary offset presses. Savings of time and shipping costs are some of the advantages of this decentralization. Presently, the quantity of each edition that we print is considerably reduced, but we still regularly print 12 different magazines in six languages.

Because of these developments, several members of our branch staff became available for full-time preaching activity in the field, and we enjoy receiving reports of their excellent work. It is obvious that

Jehovah blesses those who let themselves be used in any capacity, and that he cares for them with fatherly love.

DISTRICT CONVENTIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL FLAVOR

When the Society made the announcement that there would be special arrangements for the 1985 conventions, we were excited to learn what was planned. In time we were informed and got busy organizing our German and French "Integrity Keepers" District Conventions with visitors from abroad in mind.

Since the English-speaking group was to be especially large, we planned for an English program on all four days, concurrent with the German convention in Zurich, August 1-4. Some brothers from the United States, Canada, and Britain, as well as various English-speaking brothers living in Switzerland, were willing to accept speaking assignments. This allowed us to present all the subjects except the dramas, for which our visitors were welcome to attend the German section. At the French convention in Geneva, the English program was not as extensive. But at both conventions our local brothers enjoyed listening to enthusiastic reports from delegates from various lands.

Before and after the program, especially in the cafeteria, there was opportunity for Swiss and foreign brothers to mingle and engage in conversation. It was heartwarming to observe how many endeavored to bridge the language barrier by brushing up on the English or German they had learned in school. They understood one another, if not by



A dozen veterans of the Bethel family, averaging 46 years of full-time service each (Left to right: Lydia Wiedenmann, Marthe Diehl, Jules Feller, Willi Diehl, Paul Bigler, Martha Bigler, Paul Obrist, Ernst Zedi, Hans Russenberger, Arnold Rohrer, Johannes Förster, Josefine Förster)

words, at least by gestures, by a hug, or by the expression in their eyes. It was a demonstration of real brotherhood as only the fruit of God's spirit, love, can produce, "for it is a perfect bond of union."
—Col. 3:14.

Many of the nearly 1,800 foreign delegates accompanied Swiss publishers in the witness work and thus showed their interest in the field activities of their brothers over here. Most of them also included in their tour a visit to our Bethel home and factory, which was encouraging to us.

From brothers attending the convention in Geneva we received a touching farewell message that

read in part: "We do not want to leave you without mentioning that the things we will remember most are not the height of your mountains or the depth of your lakes, but forever we will remember your great love for our grand Creator and your faithfulness in endeavoring to observe the righteous principles of our Father. We have been stimulated by your determination to remain integrity keepers.

"Your efforts to converse with us in spite of the language barrier have been appreciated very much.

"Never will we forget your friendly and smiling faces which made us feel at home and welcome. Yes, 'how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!' And how thankful we are to belong to this our universal family of brothers!" —Ps. 133:1.

Thus the 1985 district conventions, attended by a total of 20,601 persons, have left us with many happy memories. We all felt encouraged to go on, shoulder to shoulder with our brothers worldwide, keeping our integrity to Jehovah and Christ Jesus, and looking forward to other wonderful opportunities for Christian fellowship.

DETERMINED TO KEEP ON

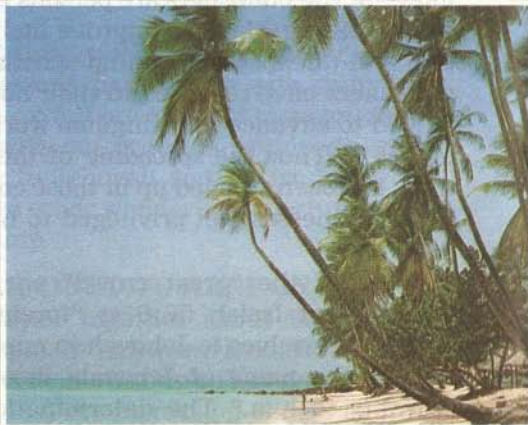
We have surveyed together about 95 years of theocratic development in Switzerland, from Brother Russell's first visit in 1891 up to the present time. From a little trickle, the increasing waters of truth have reached into every valley and high up to isolated chalets in the mountains. When we call at homes in the cities, people often recognize us as Jehovah's Witnesses before we ever have a chance to start speaking. So the Kingdom message has been sound-

ed forth and the people have heard. However, the majority feel secure and satisfied with their own situation in life and care little for what they consider impossible: lasting peace on earth under the Kingdom of God.

Still, the efforts of Jehovah's servants have not been in vain. Although many who served Jehovah for a time have turned back to the world, we are happy that we reached a peak of 13,659 loyal publishers of the Kingdom in May 1986 (including 42 in Liechtenstein). Attendance at the Memorial in 1986 was 25,698 (including 82 in Liechtenstein), promising further increase as long as Jehovah's patience continues. Interestingly, a great many—maybe half—of the publishers are persons from abroad who came to Switzerland to improve their material situation and unexpectedly found spiritual riches. Many publishers have returned to their home country and helped to advance the Kingdom work in their places of origin. Thus the spreading of the Kingdom good news has been stepped up in those countries, and the Swiss Witnesses feel privileged to have had a share in it.

Those of the "great crowd" are themselves referred to at Isaiah 56:6 as "foreigners that have joined themselves to Jehovah to minister to him and to love the name of Jehovah, in order to become servants to him." The determination of the thousands of these in Switzerland is to persevere in Jehovah's service, along with the 73 members of the anointed remnant still present here and in Liechtenstein, unitedly proclaiming the Kingdom hope to all those who are willing to hear.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



WHEN Columbus discovered Trinidad on July 31, 1498, he saw three hills in the southeastern part of the island. It is said that this reminded him of the Trinity, and so the island has been called Trinidad

ever since. Of course, the Arawak and Carib Indians had discovered the island centuries earlier, and to them this was "the land of the hummingbird."

That same year Columbus also discovered the sister island of Tobago, which some call "Robinson Crusoe's Island," believing it to be the site of Defoe's novel. Its name, Tobago, seems to come from the name the Indians gave it, Tavaco or Tobaco (Tobacco), referring to a plant that they grew and used extensively.

These islands are the southernmost in the chain that stretches from Puerto Rico to South America. Indeed, Trinidad lies just off the coast of Venezuela, near the Orinoco River. Tobago is about 20 miles (32 km) to the northeast of Trinidad. They are small tropical islands that are a pleasing green most of the year. There is much contrast in their physical appearance—rugged mountains with lovely valleys, fertile plains, and sandy beaches. Tobago is well known for its reefs and fascinating coral formations.

A TRULY COSMOPOLITAN POPULATION

Although tobacco was extensively cultivated originally, cacao estates gradually predominated. Then these, too, were replaced in importance by large sugar plantations owned by the Spanish, French, and English sugar barons. In order to work their estates, the owners procured thousands of African slaves. When the owners finally had to bow to rising pressure and free the slaves, thousands of East Indians were brought in under an indenture system. Today, Trinidad's population of over one million is about evenly divided between those of African and East Indian origin, with a much smaller number of

Europeans, Chinese, and some from the Middle East. There has been a considerable mingling of these groups through marriage, and this has resulted in a truly cosmopolitan population. Eventually Britain gained control and ruled the islands as colonies until 1962, when they were granted independence.

Many religions are represented here, including Hindu, Muslim, and major denominations of Christianity. The people themselves are friendly and warmhearted. Nevertheless, there is also the violence common to the last days.

THE SOWING OF TRUTH GETS UNDER WAY

It was to this population of mixed ethnic origins that the good news of the Kingdom began to be proclaimed in 1912. The proclaimer was Evander J. Coward, an American. The then president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Charles Taze Russell, had sent Brother Coward to the islands for the express purpose of opening them up to the preaching of Bible truth, and this he did. For several years he was very active in carrying out his commission and in getting classes of Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known, organized for regular meetings and for preaching and teaching the truth of God's Word to as many as had ears to listen.

Today, not many remain who personally heard E. J. Coward. However, Ragbir Boland Gowrie, who died early in 1986, recalled: "Brother Coward spoke on the end of the Gentile Times. His lecture was advertised both by word of mouth and by a large tract that was distributed. He was a fairly large,

well-built man. He had a masculine voice and used considerable emphasis and modulation. He had the habit of raising his right hand and snapping his fingers to emphasize a point." Another brother, also now deceased, remembered: "He was something like the man on the Quaker Oats boxes. He wore his hair long in the back."

Coward spoke in all the principal towns in Trinidad. The halls were packed with crowds that came to hear him present the Bible truths on hell, immortality of the soul, the future of the earth, and other topics. *The Mirror* printed some of his lectures or parts of them. On the other hand, he was strongly attacked in the *Port of Spain Gazette*. But he stood his ground. A dividing occurred between the merely curious and the sincere truth-seekers, and soon a regular Bible study class was organized in the home of Gilbert L. Talma, in Port of Spain. Before long, the room became too small, so in 1912 they rented the Foresters Lodge on Philip Street. That meeting place was used by Jehovah's Witnesses for some 62 years.

"BIBLE" BROWN WORKS WITH E. J. COWARD

That same year a Jamaican, William R. Brown, arrived in Trinidad to assist in the spreading of the good news. For some ten years he worked with his wife, and for a time with Brother Coward, in covering much territory in Trinidad, Tobago, and neighboring islands. It would be years before there would be organized supervision under a branch office, but both Coward and the Browns visited and strengthened the small groups that were beginning to manifest themselves. Then in 1923 Brother Brown and

his wife were given a thrilling new assignment to West Africa, where he earned the name "Bible" Brown.

One of the many places where Brother Coward gave lectures was Tunapuna. William A. Jordan, headmaster in the Anglican school there, decided to attend one of Coward's lectures to convince himself of the falsity of Coward's teachings. He armed himself with scriptures to refute Coward. But to his surprise and consternation, Coward started his lecture by using Revelation 21:8, the very scripture that was Jordan's chief support for hellfire. Being honest and humble, Jordan admitted the superiority of Coward's presentation of Bible truth. He did this personally to Coward at the end of the talk.

As Jordan progressed in the truth, he realized that his position as a lay reader in the Anglican Church and headmaster in their school was not good. He felt that he had to make a decision. At this time, failing eyesight forced him to take sick leave. After prayer to God, he promised that if he should be able to see again and resume work, the first day he went back to work he would resign from his job. He did just that in March 1915. This enabled him to care for the newly formed class of Bible Students at Tunapuna.

INTO A LEPER COLONY

Young Arthur Guy had been reading Coward's lectures in *The Mirror* and became genuinely interested. He relates: "I next decided to write Brother C. T. Russell. He sent my letter to Brother E. J. Coward, the very man whose lectures I had been reading. He was then in Barbados. He wrote to me stating that he had received my letter and was con-

vinced that I was consecrated. I would soon be visited by Brothers Talma and Ferreira. I was thrilled." A day or two after that the promise was fulfilled.

Arthur made good progress in the truth. He was soon attending meetings. Then came a severe test. He was declared a leper and taken to the leper colony, not for just a week or two, but to spend a number of years. Immediately he began witnessing to the patients concerning his newfound faith. A debate was arranged between him and a Catholic named Paul. Paul used his catechism but did not refer to a single scripture. Now it was Arthur's turn. He recalls:

"I began by reminding the audience that the discussion was to be based, not upon what we had been taught or believed or what the catechism says, but on the Bible. 'Let us hear what the Bible has to say on this subject,' I said and quoted Genesis 2:7. I then drew an illustration. 'If Mr. Brown went to England to study medicine, passed his examinations, and obtained his diplomas, he would *become* a doctor. If Mr. Brown died, the doctor would die. Therefore, since man became a living soul, when man died, the soul died.'" The audience shouted their approval, and the chairman agreed that Arthur had the better of the argument. As a result, Arthur was called "Bible" by the patients.

RESPONSIBILITY SHIFTS TO OTHER WILLING ONES

Brother Coward's work in the islands was drawing to a close. World War I was in progress, and the authorities viewed him as a security risk. About 1917 he was asked to leave the islands and so he

returned to the United States. Jehovah had blessed his ministry with success, however. The seeds of truth had taken root. For the Memorial celebration that year, after just five years, there were 68 in attendance in Port of Spain, 90 in Bridgetown, Barbados, and 21 in St. George's, Grenada. The work would continue to grow, slowly but surely.

G. L. Talma gladly accepted responsibility as the Society's representative. William Ferreira had also identified himself as a true worshiper of Jehovah. Both of them did considerable traveling to spread the truth and to visit the small classes. Talma spent some time in Barbados, his native island, and also in Grenada, British Guiana (now Guyana), and Dutch Guiana (now Suriname). Ferreira was of Portuguese descent and so was able to do some work among the Europeans.

LARGE CROWDS SEE PHOTO-DRAMA

Following World War I, it would have been difficult for another American to serve the brothers in the islands. So, in 1922, the Society sent a Canadian, George Young, to strengthen the brothers. In a report to Brother Rutherford he stated:

"I landed in Trinidad the morning of the 14th instant. . . . There is plenty of work to keep me busy here for some little time. The truth is spreading quite rapidly in Trinidad. The brethren here are doing a good work. In some respects Trinidad is the best field in the West Indies for spreading the truth."

During Young's tour of Trinidad, the *Photo-Drama of Creation* was used to stimulate the public's interest. W. R. Brown had done some work with one version of the Drama, but this time it was the

complete showing, the motion picture sections included. Large crowds saw it and heard the commentary. Regarding his work Brother Young reported:

"In Port of Spain the friends hired a theatre for two weeknights. No ad of any kind was put in the papers, but 5,000 handbills were put out. The usual number is 10,000. The place was packed and large numbers were turned away. The second night the building was thronged with people; when the doors were shut they pushed open the side entrance in order to stand at the open side of the theatre. The warnings of the priests of Baal are of no avail. The truth is gradually winning its way in Trinidad."

Brother Young stayed in the Caribbean for about six months.

OUR MEETINGS THEN

Meetings in those early days were not what we are accustomed to now. William A. Douglas, a faithful worker until his death in 1981, remembered:

"The first meeting I attended was on a Tuesday night. We studied a lesson from the book *Tabernacle Shadows*. After that a chart was posted on the wall, and a brother with a rod in his hand was explaining certain things. I could not grasp anything from what the brother was saying.

"Wednesday night meeting was prayer meeting. One brother would pray, then a song; another brother would pray, then a song. All present would pray. One by one they would stand and give a testimony. Some would say how many good things God had done for them; others would say how God helped them to overcome temptations; others would say how God had helped them to avoid an accident.

When my turn came I could not find anything to testify on. . . .

"I can clearly remember the happenings in the first *Watchtower* meeting Mother and I attended. The conductor asked a question; a brother would answer this way: 'My thought is so and so.' Another would say, 'I am not in harmony with that thought, for so and so.' This would go on for a whole hour, and the first paragraph on the study was never completed. Now we appreciate with thankfulness to Jehovah the great improvements he has granted us through the Society."

BOLD—BUT LACKING TACT

In the 1920's theocratic tactfulness was unknown to the brothers. They used very plain and sometimes blunt speech in presenting the Bible's message in homes of the people. W. A. Douglas recalls an experience that took place during a convention in Port of Spain:

"It was the first time arrangements were made for brothers to work together from house to house, as far as I can recall. I, being a young immature brother, was assigned to work with an older publisher . . . It was Sunday morning. We called at a home and the brother made the offer of literature to some men in the gallery. An argument began. The brother told the man, 'The reason why you cannot understand me is that your father is Satan the Devil.' One of the men walked up to him and said: 'You come in my house and tell me that Satan is my father?' The man then struck the brother in his mouth, knocking out two teeth. While we were coming downstairs and walking to the street, the brother told me if it was

not for his consecration to God, he would have handled that young man! He felt at that time that he was suffering for the truth, so he was in good spirits."

Although the brothers were not at that time being served by representatives from the headquarters of the Society, they were endeavoring to make adjustments in their lives to conform to the better understanding of God's Word that they were receiving. Jehovah's spirit thus aided the brothers to maintain unity of thought, expression, and action to a fairly good degree.

TRINIDAD BRANCH OFFICE REGISTERED

May 1932 was an important date for Trinidad. The branch office at 64 Frederick Street, Port of Spain, was registered with the government, and Brother Talma was given legal standing as the representative of the Society in Trinidad and Tobago. Reports were submitted to this office from a number of the other islands of the British West Indies.

The witness being given took on increased intensity with the use of portable phonographs and the more powerful transcription machines. In 1934 there were six transcription machines in use: one in Grenada, one in Dominica, and four in Trinidad. People would not always come out in the open to hear the lectures, but many would listen through open windows. Honesthearted ones appreciated what they heard. Remarks such as the following were made: "This is the only consolation; let us draw near." "That's right, boy, come here and listen; don't go back to Belmont and let that man [a clergyman] fool you anymore." Many portable phonographs were also imported by the brothers, and these added their voices to the witness being given.

A BAN—EVEN ON THE BIBLE

Without warning, the importation of our literature was banned by the government. Alfred Wallace Seymour, acting governor of Trinidad and Tobago, in Executive Council, deemed *The Golden Age* and other publications of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society to be of a seditious character. By Order Number 49 of August 20, 1936, all literature printed by the Watch Tower Society and the Golden Age Publishing Company was banned. That included the Bible itself!

When it was brought to the attention of the governor, Sir Arthur Fletcher, that the Bible had been banned, a further Order in Council, Number 60 of December 3, 1936, was issued that allowed any literature to come in for which an import license was granted. Thereafter, the Bible, *The Harp of God*, and three booklets were allowed. For nine years this condition continued in Trinidad.

Who was behind it? Many years later, in the spring of 1946, the then police commissioner, Colonel Mueller, told the branch servant in a private interview that the ban had really been because the Society's publications made attacks on the Roman Catholic Church. The clergy had agitated for it.

In St. Kitts, to the north of Trinidad, on March 20, 1944, the government had all Watch Tower literature they got their hands on burned in the boilers of a sugar factory. Even so, the Witnesses kept busy with what literature they had, and they used their phonographs and transcription machines whenever and wherever possible. But the police seized some sound equipment too.

With the continuing effects of the ban, the number of publishers dropped from 293 in 1936 to 229 by 1940. But the activity of the brothers was productive, because now they were beginning to make return visits and conduct Bible studies.

SCHOOLTEACHER SENT TO PRISON

W. A. Douglas was one of several in Trinidad who were jailed during this time of persecution. In April 1939 two police officers searched his home, where he conducted a private school, and found the booklet *Face the Facts*. Three months later he was summoned to appear in court; the case finally was heard on October 12. He was accused of being an unpatriotic schoolteacher, refusing to participate in Empire Day celebrations, and not allowing his pupils to sing the national anthem. Douglas defended himself by stating that the school was a private one and that no singing at all was done there. He used Acts 5: 27-32 in his defense, pointing out that, like the apostles of Jesus Christ, he "must obey God as ruler rather than men." The magistrate found him guilty and sentenced him to two months at hard labor. Douglas appealed.

Justice Vincent Brown presided as appeal judge. He was nervous and drank three tumblers of water while reading out the court's decision. His first words were: "This man is not fit to live in the community. A man in his position as a schoolteacher would not teach the children to be loyal to His Majesty the King and should not be permitted to freedom. We uphold the sentence of the learned magistrate."

So in 1940 Brother Douglas found himself in prison. While there, he had fine opportunities to witness,

and he did so. He came to be known as "Face the Facts." On Sunday mornings many of the prisoners did not attend the religious services held in the prison church, so Douglas held question-and-answer sessions with them. He reported: "I am happy to mention that during the seven Sundays I spent in jail I had the privilege to speak to more than 200 persons at one time. Also, being permitted to walk over all the prison's grounds, I spoke to all I came in contact with about Christ's Kingdom being the only hope of mankind."

THE BAN IS LIFTED

During the ban an American military base was established in Trinidad. An American at the base had relatives in the truth in the United States. Whenever his relatives sent him *The Watchtower*, he would give it to the brothers. They would have typewritten copies made, leaving off the name *Watchtower*, and would then distribute these to the congregations. Thus the brothers were able to get spiritual food despite the ban.

To obtain relief, however, a large meeting was held at the Princes Building on December 22, 1940, and a resolution requesting that the ban be lifted was forwarded to London to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. But the matter was deferred until after the war. On September 11, 1945, another petition, this one bearing 20,851 signatures, was forwarded to London to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Early in November the good news came through that the ban had been lifted. Literature could again be freely imported. That service year the branch office shipped out 30,988 books and 77,226 booklets to the eagerly waiting brothers.

A NEW ERA IN PREACHING

A number of provisions had been made by the Society that were to make the postwar period a new era of theocratic activity. In 1943 a Theocratic Ministry School had been arranged to train local brothers to be competent speakers and readers. The Watchtower Bible School of Gilead had been put into operation to train missionaries for opening up and strengthening the Kingdom work in many lands. Also, in 1945 a campaign featuring public lectures in each congregation was begun. This, together with encouragement to give brief Bible sermons at the doors, made the use of the phonograph and transcription machines no longer necessary. We were also thrilled to learn that for the first time the president of the Watch Tower Society would be serving conventions in the Caribbean! The flood of help provided by all those means would contribute to remarkable growth for years to come.

Alexander Tharp, of the third class of Gilead, graduated on July 31, 1944. Thereafter he was assigned to Trinidad to look after the work in the British West Indies branch, as it then became known, for Gilbert Talma had now become advanced in years and was in failing health. Brother Tharp arrived on March 24, 1946, a few days in advance of the Society's officials.

An incident that occurred in the hotel rooms of Brothers Knorr and Franz impressed Brother Tharp and was never forgotten. One day when Brother Tharp went up to their rooms, Brother Franz was polishing his shoes. Without saying anything, Brother Franz squatted down and polished Brother Tharp's shoes. It was a spontaneous act and

**Alexander Tharp,
Branch
Committee
coordinator in
Trinidad, with his
wife Lois**



reminded Brother Tharp of the act of Jesus in washing the feet of the apostles.—John 13:3-17.

The convention was a great success, with 1,611 present for President Knorr's public talk, "Be Glad, Ye Nations." While N. H. Knorr was in Trinidad, he gave instructions to look for a place that could be purchased for a branch office and missionary home. The back-room office at 64 Frederick Street had served its purpose. On May 30, 1946, 21 Taylor Street in Woodbrook, Port of Spain, was purchased and was to serve as branch office and missionary home for 26 years.

MISSIONARIES CONTRIBUTE TO GROWTH

On October 4, eight more missionaries arrived. There was a steady flow of missionaries to the various islands of the branch for several years—years of improvement in theocratic organization and of rapid increase. In Port of Spain the number of publishers jumped from 60 in 1946 to 159 in 1947. In some parts

of town it seemed as if everyone wanted to study the Bible with one of the missionaries. At times a missionary would have as many as 30 different studies to care for in a month.

Some Bible studies produced true disciples. Teresa Berry recently wrote: "One of the most outstanding studies that I started was with Mabel Guin and her family. I still remember her saying, after my talking with her for a few minutes, 'We always wondered if there was anything we could do for God, since he has done so much for us.' I started the study with her, and soon she began attending the meetings and going in the service. The whole family of ten came into the truth. I still write to Mabel, and she is a very active Witness down to this day, some 37 years later."

The missionaries came to be well known. One day when Peter Brown was coming home from field service, he took a shortcut through the cemetery as a funeral procession came in. They recognized Peter to be a missionary, so one of the party approached and said: "We do not have anyone to give a talk at the grave. Would you do that?" He gladly did.

The new missionaries had to get readjusted in a number of ways, and they also helped the local brothers to make some adjustments. At the Kingdom Hall it was noticed that the brothers sat on one side of the hall and were all dressed in navy blue or black suits. The sisters, dressed in white, sat on the other side of the hall. But the missionaries dressed in all sorts of colors and began to sit on both sides. Before long the old custom disappeared.

The Trinidad office was now receiving reports from small groups in all the islands of the British West Indies except Jamaica.

CIRCUIT OVERSEERS EXPEND THEMSELVES

Late in 1946, Joshua Steelman, a Gilead graduate who had been in Cuba, was assigned to serve the Trinidad branch as a representative of the President's Office and to do servant-to-the-brethren (circuit overseer) work in all the islands. He was very successful in encouraging publishers to get out in the field service. New peaks of publishers were reached in practically every congregation he served.

The following year the missionary home in Barbados was closed, and the remaining missionary, Bennett Berry, was assigned to be servant to the brethren. His experiences would fill a book. There was little transportation. If there was a bus, it was hard to get a seat. Chickens, fish, and goats were also passengers, making a ride quite an experience! Talk among the passengers was constant. Roads were narrow and winding, especially in mountainous areas.

On the island of Dominica, Brother Berry had to walk 18 miles (29 km) over mountain trails and up a riverbed to reach one of the congregations. One time he got a horse, but the horse fell. Nevertheless, he had great joy in seeing humble brothers get a better appreciation of their relationship with Jehovah, his Son, and Jehovah's organization. Brother Berry's spirituality grew, too, as he unselfishly ministered to the needs of his brothers.

RESPONSE TO ASSEMBLY ADVERTISING

A district assembly was arranged for May 21-23, 1948, to be held in Port of Spain. There was to be extensive advertising. Everything worked well. This time, in addition to the usual information marching, handbills, and window signs, a bicycle parade was formed with placards on each bicycle. It certainly did attract attention.

Since the building for the assembly was small, the public talk was to be held outdoors in Woodford Square, the heart of the business district, at 8:00 p.m. A tropical full moon lighted the scene. The brothers were overjoyed to see a crowd of 3,623 gather around the bandstand to hear "The Coming Gladness of All Mankind."

OPEN-AIR PUBLIC TALKS

A number of local brothers had become fairly competent public speakers, and these, along with the circuit overseers, began to give open-air talks frequently. It was easy to arrange such talks.

A shopkeeper would be contacted for permission to give a talk under the overhanging eaves of his shop. If electricity was not available, a gasoline lantern or a carbide light would be hung on one of the roof supports. Then a table for Bible and notes, and everything was in readiness. Word-of-mouth advertising and handbills in the area the day or the week of the talk would be sure to produce a crowd of 100 or more. There was little to distract, apart from traffic and insects. In time, however, with the advance of crime and rowdyism, the era of open-air talks came to an end.

Nevertheless, those open-air talks had introduced the truth to some sheeplike ones. After one such talk in Chaguanas, a young Hindu had obtained two translations of the Bible from the speaker. That young man entered the full-time service, and he served Jehovah faithfully until his death.

THE SIBIA AND THE LIGHT

When the Society purchased a sailing vessel (the *Sibia*), a new and exciting method of bringing the

good news to the smaller islands was inaugurated. S. J. Carter, G. Maki, R. Parkin, and A. Worsley comprised the initial crew. They sailed in a sort of circuit between Puerto Rico and Trinidad, giving a thorough witness on all the small islands. Even the larger islands enjoyed their periodic short stays for supplies and to attend assemblies.

Most of the islands had small fishing villages scattered along their coasts. Since roads did not always link these villages overland, the use of the *Sibia* proved very practical in bringing the good news to these isolated areas.

During 1953 the Society arranged to replace the *Sibia* with a larger twin-engine motor vessel called *Le Cheval Noir*, which name was later changed to *Light*. On November 9, 1953, it was registered in Trinidad as its home port.

However, the following year, Maurice Dorman, Colonial Secretary, was present when Brother Knorr spoke to an audience of 3,269 in Woodford Square. Later that year, on July 6, Mr. Dorman, who was then acting governor, signed an order in Executive Council that deemed the crew of the *Light* undesirable visitors. On September 25, 1954, when the *Light* put into port after serving an assembly in Barbados, immigration officers served notice on the crew that they were not permitted to land. Negotiations and interviews with officials proved fruitless, and the vessel was ordered to leave not later than October 5. It did, in the face of one of the worst hurricanes to strike the Caribbean in years.

LOCAL BROTHERS SERVE

Local brothers who could serve as special pioneers now played an increasingly important role. Native

circuit overseers had already replaced foreign missionaries to a large extent and in time would do so completely. During 1950 and 1951 a missionary home had functioned in Scarborough, Tobago, but some feeling against white persons on the part of the public hindered their effectiveness. So in 1954 two local special pioneers, Edward Harry and Oliver Smith, were assigned to Tobago to try to expand the Kingdom work. This proved successful and demonstrated that, in some territories at least, qualified local brothers would be more effective than foreign missionaries.

Since then, some of the local special pioneers have attended the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and returned to Trinidad. Two of these are Theresa Chin Chee Fat and Sylvia Permell. They have served faithfully and zealously, and Jehovah has blessed their disciple-making service. Theresa has been blessed with 46 spiritual "children," while Sylvia has seen 59 dedicate their lives to Jehovah and get baptized.

GROWTH REQUIRES NEW BRANCHES

At the time of Brother Knorr's visit in January 1954, it was decided that the Kingdom work in the Leeward Islands had grown sufficiently for a separate branch office to be set up. Nine islands would comprise the Leeward Islands branch, leaving Trinidad with seven. Another division occurred in 1966 when the Barbados branch was formed. The Trinidad branch now included just Trinidad and Tobago. Our own field was getting smaller, but it was because of expansion of the Kingdom work.

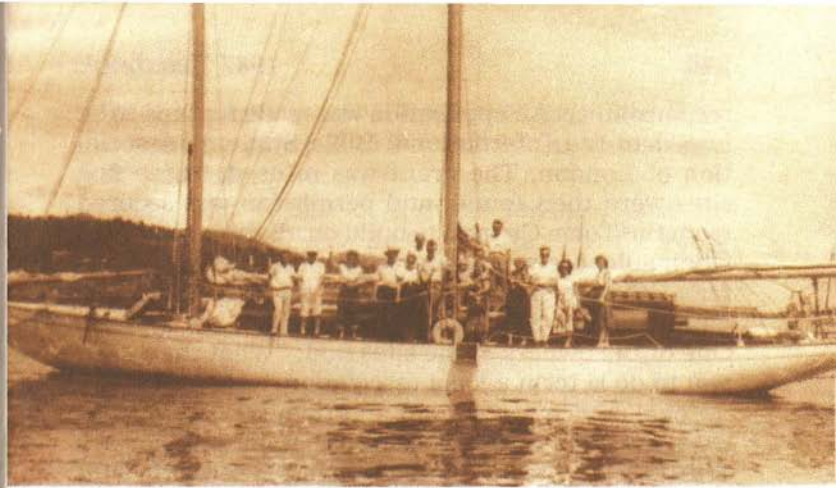
During the 1950's and following, only modest gains in the number of publishers were experienced,

and in some years there was a decrease. This did not necessarily mean that there was no interest to be cultivated. It was largely due to the economic conditions. Unemployment was high, wages were low, and families were large. This was true of the Witnesses as well as others. And so, during these years there was a constant flow of Witnesses as emigrants to England, Canada, and the United States. Yet spiritual growth became evident.

PROVIDING SUITABLE KINGDOM HALLS

During the latter part of 1959 a brother in Trinidad discussed with Robert D. Newton, who was then branch servant, the possibility of inviting congregations to pool their resources in order to build Kingdom Halls for some of the congregations. At that time there was only one small Kingdom Hall in Trinidad; it had been built in San Fernando in 1940. Eventually a Kingdom Hall Fund came into existence. Not long afterward, work was begun on a fairly large Kingdom Hall in San Juan. Nearly all the labor was voluntary. It was a sight to see a group of men and women, all Witnesses, mixing concrete and forming a bucket brigade to pour the concrete. Early in 1961 the hall was finished. It became one of the locations for the Kingdom Ministry School classes that were inaugurated that year.

Almost immediately another hall was begun, this one for the Laventille Congregation in Port of Spain. Although the fund was soon depleted, it became possible for loans to be secured from the Society for such construction. More congregations took advantage of the provision to put up a good Kingdom Hall. Today there are 27 halls, with plans for more in the near future.



Aboard the missionary boat "Sibia"

In May 1985 something new occurred in the building of Kingdom Halls. The brothers had been thrilled with reports of quickly built Kingdom Halls in other lands. Could such a thing be done in Trinidad? A building committee was set up to investigate. Intensive discussions took place, and it was decided to try to put up a hall at the Siparia Congregation in two weekends instead of one. The response of the brothers was thrilling. Yes, it was done on the two weekends, and the brothers in Siparia are enjoying their new hall. All this building activity has certainly contributed to the expansion of the Kingdom-preaching work in these islands.

LOCAL ASSOCIATION IS FORMED

To care for the growth, new branch facilities became necessary. In 1963 Brother Tharp again began serving as branch overseer, after a 15-year interval during which others had cared for that

responsibility. An application was made for land to be leased to the International Bible Students Association of London. The grant was refused. Three fine sites were then found, and permission was secured from the Town Council to build on all three sites. But when a license was requested from the Prime Minister's Office to secure title in the name of the International Bible Students Association, it was refused. One of the owners of the sites said: "What they want you to do is form a local association."

Legal advice was sought and then necessary steps were taken to form a local association of Jehovah's Witnesses. A meeting of congregation servants with the branch office personnel on August 18, 1968, was the basis for forming the association. Draft regulations for the association had been prepared and an Advisory Council was elected. Finally, after the sponsoring of a private bill in both houses of Parliament, a bill was enacted and assented to on August 7, 1969. Now the brothers had a legal association that enabled them to hold, acquire, and sell property without the need of a license from the government.

All existing titles of Kingdom Halls were now vested in the local association, and all future acquisitions of sites could be taken in the name of the Association of Jehovah's Witnesses of Trinidad and Tobago. Now marriage officers could also be appointed, so it would no longer be necessary for Jehovah's Witnesses to be married by a civil officer of the government.

ARRANGING FOR CONVENTIONS

With the growth of the organization, the need to find more suitable places for annual district conventions became pressing. Theaters had long since been outgrown. Two locations were available that were

partially suitable—the Himalaya Club in San Juan and the Queen's Hall in Port of Spain. These were used year after year.

Then Eric Gregorio, a local brother, said he thought he could get the Grand Stand at the race-track of the Queen's Park Savannah, and he did! This was the first time since 1932 that permission had been granted for us to use this fine facility. The convention was arranged for October 1-4, 1970.

Suddenly, however, early in 1970, Black Power demonstrations broke out. Fighting, burning, and some killing occurred. An emergency was declared in April and a curfew was imposed. Could the district convention be held? Would we be able to have our circuit assemblies in July? Well, the commissioner of police granted permission to hold all the assemblies.

The circuit assemblies went off smoothly with the exception of our largest one, in Port of Spain. Just before that assembly was to begin, the circuit overseer was informed by the commissioner of police that, while we could hold the assembly, we could not use any sound equipment. An interview with him proved to be fruitless. A delegation then attempted to see the minister of national security; this, too, failed. A second attempt was made to get the commissioner to change his mind, but he emphatically stated he would not. So the Friday program was presented with no sound equipment at all to an audience of over 1,300. Saturday morning a brother who had formerly been a policeman attempted to have an interview, only to be told that the commissioner was not in his office on weekends. We had done everything possible.

Then about noon on Saturday, a young woman who was interested in the truth made up her mind to do something about the problem. She had attended on Friday night but had not been able to hear. She decided to phone the commissioner at his residence, although she was not acquainted with him. First, she prayed that Jehovah would soften his heart. What was the result? The commissioner granted this request from a person who was not yet one of Jehovah's Witnesses! The sound was fine for the remaining days of the assembly, and the 2,187 who attended the public talk could hear it clearly.

When the "Men of Goodwill" District Assembly was held in October at the Grand Stand, there was no interference at all. How pleasant it was to have plenty of space all under cover, with ample parking space just adjacent to the Grand Stand! Even though there was pouring rain on the last day, 3,239 were in attendance. Having set a precedent in cleaning up the Grand Stand and leaving it clean, we have never had any further trouble in getting it for both circuit assemblies and district conventions.

SERVING FAITHFULLY TILL DEATH

Not only are the anointed brothers of Christ Jesus to serve faithfully until death but his "other sheep," too, must prove faithful under all circumstances, even till death if that occurs. This has been true of some of our missionaries.

Edmund Charlwood and Jerry Doering arrived in 1949. Soon Edmund was assigned to circuit work, which took him to all the islands under the Trinidad branch. Under the broiling tropical sun and in pouring rain he was busy in the field ministry with the

brothers. Gladly he stayed with them in their humble homes, and he became well acquainted with a diet of breadfruit and salt fish. For 19 years he traveled, first as circuit overseer, then as district overseer. When Edmund became advanced in age, Jerry was given the assignment.

For a time, Jerry and his wife had served in Barbados. Those years of full-time service helped to make his work as district overseer effective. But tragedy struck suddenly during February 1971 while Jerry and his wife were in the field service. They were struck by a car that failed to stop on entering a major road. Brother Doering died the following morning. He had served faithfully for nearly 22 years since his arrival in Trinidad. His death certainly was a blow.

Edmund Charlwood continued to serve in a missionary home in a diminishing capacity as advancing age weakened him. Finally in August 1976 this loyal brother died. His widow Elsie, as well as Alice, Jerry's widow, continue their missionary service.

Among the brothers who comprised the crew of the *Sibia* and the *Light* was Stanley Carter. He worked hard along with the others to proclaim the good news among the islands. When he married Ann, they were assigned to open up a missionary home in St. George's, Grenada. It was not an easy assignment, but they persevered and saw Jehovah's blessing on their efforts. In 1965, because of serious illness, they went to Canada to obtain medical treatment for Stanley. Shortly afterward, he ended his long years of faithful service.

These integrity-keeping missionaries are now resting until the voice of Christ calls forth to life such ones who are in God's memory.—John 5:28, 29.

OUTSTANDING AUXILIARY PIONEER SERVICE

For quite a few years consistent steps have been taken to enlarge the auxiliary pioneer activity in these islands. During the 1960's the branch overseer made it a practice to visit the meeting of the district and circuit overseers with the congregation overseers at circuit assemblies. He would take about five or ten minutes to talk to them and encourage them to emphasize vacation (auxiliary) pioneering in April.

Then at a circuit assembly at the Himalaya Club in January of 1968, a brother had a part on the Service Meeting program entitled "The Pioneer Service—A Real Joy." All over the building there were signs with the letters "VPA" on them. What did they mean? Came time for his part, and onto the stage walked a large brother with a sandwich sign. On it was written "April 1968." His name was "Big April." Now the audience realized that VPA meant "Vacation Pioneer in April"! The brothers never forgot that demonstration.

Gradually at first and then rapidly the brothers began to respond to the encouragement. Unbaptized children and adults were encouraged to work with the vacation pioneers and strive to meet the same goals. Surprising results began to be obtained from 1978 onward, as the chart on page 247 shows.

In the congregation in Belmont, Port of Spain, the elders personally talked to the brothers and gave them an application form to read and consider. Charts were prepared and posted that gave schedules of hours for the days of the week, showing how housewives, secularly employed persons, and stu-

dents could reach the goal of hours. Slogans were posted on the walls of the Kingdom Hall to help all to keep vacation pioneering in mind.

Other congregations learned of Belmont's success and began to use similar methods. As a result, by 1985 almost every congregation had excellent support for auxiliary pioneer service. In Belmont, 75 percent of their total publishers were auxiliary pioneers, averaging 63 hours in the field. Arima East reported 73 percent, while Maraval had over 63 percent reporting as auxiliary pioneers. These were large congregations of over 100 publishers each. The Cocoyea Congregation, which was reporting 93 publishers, had 78 percent in the auxiliary pioneer ranks.

How could so many manage to do it? A sister explained: "It was not until the seventh of the month after a talk from an elder that I made out my application. I encouraged a young sister to go along with me. She agreed, so I got her parents' permission for her to sleep at my home sometimes in order for us to do street work early in the morning. My schedule was as follows: up around 5:00 a.m., get on the street around 6:30 a.m. and work to 8:00 a.m., then off to my secular job. In the afternoon I'd spend another two hours or more. Saturday was my day off, so I'd begin around the same time, take time off for lunch and rest, and be at it until 9:00 p.m., putting in a minimum of ten hours. On Sundays I'd spend only one hour in field service. Besides the sister, I was very pleased to meet other brothers doing street work, for without them I would not have been able to stay out as late as I did . . . I was able to put in 75 hours and make 12 return visits and hold 2 home

Bible studies, besides placing 716 magazines. As I look at my report, Luke 17:10 keeps coming into my mind: 'What I have done is what I ought to have done.'

In one congregation a sister in her 70's pioneers several times each year. In April 1985 she was very ill, but when she began to feel a little better around the 15th of the month, she wanted to get going again. She dragged her arthritic body up from the bed and made it known that if she was going to die, she wanted it to be as a pioneer, active in Jehovah's service. With great effort she got out to share in the ministry on the streets. Then others in her congregation arranged to use their cars to help her. Just ten days later she had met her goal of hours for the month. At the time of this writing she is still alive and planning to auxiliary pioneer again.

The entire Bethel family has also found it possible to share in this increased field ministry. And as one of the senior members of the family said: "How refreshed we felt, even though physically tired!"

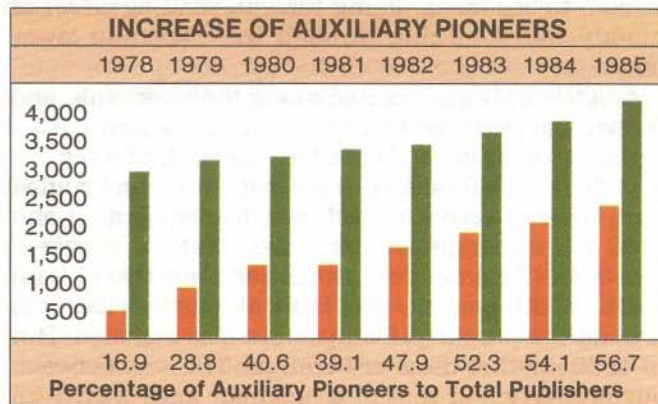
PROVISIONS FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLING

In 1961 the first Kingdom Ministry Schools were held in Trinidad. All special pioneers were privileged to attend. They certainly appreciated this privilege and were benefited by the course. Still later, regular pioneers who were brothers had the opportunity to benefit from the school courses. In 1985 all ministerial servants had a special course for their benefit. A better spirit toward the full-time service was evident, but there was more to come.

In 1977 a beautiful textbook entitled *Shining as Illuminators in the World* was prepared as the basis for a two-week course of instruction for the pioneers!

Now the sisters could also get much upbuilding encouragement and instruction. This had an excellent influence on the full-time work, especially the auxiliary pioneer service. The spirit of pioneering seemed to rub off on the congregation publishers, and this was particularly noticeable in April of 1978 when a fine new peak of 500 auxiliary pioneers was reached.

Many letters of appreciation have been received. One reads: "This is to express my appreciation for the Pioneer Service School. It was indeed a wonderful provision from Jah at the right time. A few months before attending the school, my husband began doing circuit work and I accompanied him; this was a real challenge for me. The extensive course helped me to meet that challenge. Now the field service has taken on added meaning to me, as my presentations are more effective, interesting, and successful. This is because of applying some of the fine suggestions given at the school as to showing more personal interest in the householder.



"One of the points that impressed me the most is that we are fellow workers with Jehovah in the preaching and disciple-making work, thus showing the need to develop a close acquaintance with him. This has impressed on me the need to call on him more often in prayer while engaging in the service and has made me more confident and assured of his backing."

EXPANSION REQUIRES NEW FACILITIES

In May 1972, after 26 years at 21 Taylor Street, we moved into our new home and branch office just outside of Port of Spain. It was not a new building, but it certainly did suit our needs much better than our previous site.

When we decided that we should acquire this property, we noted that it was adjacent to the Maraval River. It was the dry season when we moved in; inquiries of neighbors did not arouse any apprehension of flooding of the property. But December of that same year saw a flash flood that caused the stream to become a raging torrent, sending a foot of muddy water surging through the office and lower floor.

A block wall was erected along the riverbank, and for several years we had no problem. Then in 1975 a devastating flash flood smashed the wall, covered the first floor with four feet (1.2 m) of water, and ruined thousands of books, as well as office equipment and files. On an engineer's recommendation, a seven-foot-high (2 m) tapering stone wall, four feet (1.2 m) thick at the bottom, was built along the river and around the property. Pumps were also installed. But in 1980 another disaster befell us. The wall between our property and that of a neighbor gave way, with

the result that tons of water raced around the branch home, smashing doors, causing havoc, and endangering lives. Within 30 days two more floods came, and there were no protecting walls. As they had done before, the brothers turned out in large numbers to help us clean up. Neighbors could hardly believe their eyes as tons of debris were hauled away. In a remarkably short time, things were looking fairly normal again. A new reinforced concrete and steel wall soon was built, but the Branch Committee recommended to the Governing Body that the branch be relocated.

WE BUILD A NEW BRANCH FACILITY

In addition to danger from floodwaters, the home and office had again grown too small for the work. There just was no longer sufficient room to care for the needs of the congregations. Since 1972, there had been a nearly 40-percent increase in the number of publishers.

The Governing Body approved the Branch Committee's recommendation. In time an acre of land was located between Port of Spain and the airport. There were problems, but these were overcome one by one. When the Pentecostals had wanted to buy the site for a church, the neighbors had protested because of the noise that such meetings would generate. There was also some fear of "catching the spirit." But when Jehovah's Witnesses assured the neighbors that no danger would be posed if the Witnesses built on the site and that noise would be minimal, the neighbors did not oppose. So in 1981 the property was purchased in the name of the local Association of Jehovah's Witnesses of Trinidad and Tobago.

Nearly a year and a half elapsed before we were able at last to begin work on the building itself. The brothers gave of themselves willingly for the work. When floors were to be poured, many hands were needed, as there was no sophisticated equipment available—just two cement mixers, a lot of buckets, and a series of platforms for brothers to stand on to pass the buckets from one to another. Two long lines of brothers and sisters stretched from the mixers to where the cement was being poured. Another line returned empty buckets to the mixers. Frequently, craftsmen worked all night. The result was a truly unifying and stimulating effect on the congregations.

For the dedication program on March 16, 1985, Milton G. Henschel of the Governing Body was present. Publishers from every congregation in Trinidad were also on hand; 2,942 filled every seat and vantage point. When everyone left, they were in a joyful and exuberant mood.

JEHOVAH GIVES PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT

In Isaiah chapter 60, Jehovah long ago foretold his purpose both to improve and to enlarge his earthly organization in his due time. The old-timers among us can testify that this has certainly come true. How much better conditions are in the congregations now than when brothers campaigned to be elected as elders! The congregations today are prospering spiritually.

There are now 50 congregations in Trinidad and Tobago. Prospects for more are encouraging. Our April 1986 report shows 4,558 publishers, who placed

over 135,000 magazines in addition to 11,537 books. Over 6,990 home Bible studies were being conducted. At the Memorial celebration there was an encouraging 13,961 in attendance. During the following months, many more new disciples were baptized.

Since the time of the arrival of missionaries in 1946 a great quantity of literature has been distributed for such a small branch. The report shows over 1,600,000 books, upwards of 1,500,000 booklets, and millions of magazines. A great witness has been given in Trinidad and the islands that were under this branch. There are also prospects for a further great ingathering of sheeplike ones before the end of this system of things.

A circuit overseer reports: "While working on a Wednesday morning during a district overseer's visit, we arrived at a street, only to be told, 'Brother, we worked here Friday.' Nevertheless, we decided to work the street. On calling at a home we were invited in, and my partner presented the Topic for Conversation.

"The woman explained to us that she was a Trinidadian living in London with her family and was home on vacation. Her mother-in-law, in London, had encouraged her to read the Bible, and after a while she did so and enjoyed it. On telling her mother-in-law this, she was told, 'That is not enough; you must join a church.' The mother-in-law was an Adventist. But the woman did not want just to join a church, so she went to God in prayer and told him that she would take it as a sign that the 'first people bringing the gospel to my door have the truth,' and we were the first to call at her door. The Britain

branch was written so that a Bible study could be continued with her when she returned. This study was conducted. Now the family is back in Trinidad. Both husband and wife are baptized, and they and their children associate with a congregation in east Trinidad. What is interesting is this: The publishers had worked there on Friday, but she came in from London on Saturday, and we were there on the following Wednesday." Yes, good results are being had in the field ministry, and those who make themselves available are sharing in this joy.

Along with improved shepherding arrangements for individual congregations, there has been a corresponding improvement in supervising the work from the branch office. No longer does a branch overseer alone have the responsibility for overseeing the activities of the branch. A dividing of the work and responsibilities among members of the Branch Committee has made it possible to give closer attention to all the many facets of the work. The present members of the committee here are Earl David, Zephryne Nedd, Winston Simon, and Alexander Tharp.

"The land of the hummingbird" and "Robinson Crusoe's Island" are pleasant places in which to live and serve the great Creator, Jehovah, who makes all things pretty in their time. (Eccl. 3:11) The Trinidad branch is now small in area and in numbers when compared with larger countries of the earth. Yet there is a warm glow that comes when we contemplate the history of the work here. It is our determination to continue to press ahead with our brothers worldwide in caring for the Kingdom interests as we look forward to the time when everything that has breath will be praising Jehovah.—Ps. 150:6.

"YOU HAVE CROWNED THE YEAR WITH YOUR GOODNESS"

As the foregoing reports show, Jehovah's Witnesses in 208 lands around the globe enjoy a marvelous unity. It is a oneness in belief, faith, organization, and service to our "one God and Father," such as has never before been witnessed on the face of this earth! (Eph. 4:3-5; Mark 12:29, 30) How wonderfully has Jehovah answered Jesus' prayer at John 17:20, 21!

During 1986 there has been astonishing growth worldwide, notably in predominantly Catholic countries—Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, France, Spain, Portugal, and—in the very heart of Christendom—Italy. In Poland the "Divine Peace" District Conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses drew capacity crowds. In the Oriental sector of Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, Jehovah's work moved forward with greater momentum. This is illustrated by Buddhist Japan's publisher peaks, which now stretch out for 92 consecutive months.

Oh, yes, Babylon the Great fumes at Jehovah's Witnesses. She has vigorously opposed our work in some lands where religious influence has been strong. But her political power is waning. She jumped on the UN bandwagon in giving full support to the 1986 International Year of Peace, but this did nothing to advance the cause of true peace. It served only to identify her as "part of the world"—this world that is alienated from God and doomed. Her perch atop the UN "beast"—which a Roman pontiff described as "man's last hope for peace"—is a precarious one indeed.—John 15:19; contrast Revelation 17:3-6, 15-18.

Recently, a Hong Kong newspaper carried the headline "Church 'must be part of world'" and quoted Pope John Paul as saying that "the Catholic Church desired to be part of the modern world." But a different John of the first century said under inspiration: "Do not be

loving either the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him; . . . the world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever." (1 John 2:15, 17) And another Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, foretold our critical "last days," saying: "Wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse, misleading and being misled." (2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13) That is the situation in today's world. But must *true* Christianity be part of that wicked world? Far from it!

With regard to the world's conglomerate empire of false religion, the divine call rings out: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues." (Rev. 18:4) The individuals that make up the 3,229,022 witnesses of Jehovah on earth today have done just that! It is our prayer that other millions of teachable people, including many from among the 8,160,597 who attended the 1986 Memorial of Jesus' death, may yet take a dedicated stand for Jehovah. By so doing they may be saved in the day of "the burning anger of Jehovah."—Zeph. 2:2, 3.

'Feet Shod With the Good News of Peace'

The God of peace has sent forth his people with "feet shod with the equipment of the good news of peace." (Eph. 6:15) This he has done in a wonderful way, giving us the precious Word of truth, his empowering spirit, and a forward-moving global organization.

In recent years, Jehovah has provided us with publications of superlative quality; and at the "Divine Peace" District Conventions we received additional equipment. The beautiful updated brochure "*Look! I Am Making All Things New*" will no doubt be a valuable tool for greatly increasing the 2,726,252 Bible studies that were being conducted in the homes of the people last year. The brochure *Jehovah's Witnesses—Unitedly Doing God's Will Worldwide* will provide a splendid basis for discussing with such newly interested ones the various

facets of God's organization and its activities. As "solid food" we now have an absorbing book for group study, *Worldwide Security Under the "Prince of Peace."* (Heb. 5:14) And the latest cassette, *Kingdom Melodies* No. 7, should remind us, as we listen to its delightful tunes, that we have every reason to thank and praise our illustrious God for all of his goodness.

New Kingdom Halls are sprouting up by the hundreds earth wide. Assembly Halls, new or expanded branch facilities in some 40 lands, additional printing presses for four-color and simultaneous publication—all of these provisions come as a blessing from our loving God. Jehovah has indeed stirred the hearts of his willing servants to support this advancement by their hard work, their material sacrifices, and their prayers! (Mal. 3:10) As we move along, procedures will be simplified; we must be well organized in view of the tremendous shout of praise being sent up by the 391,294 pioneers and other zealous publishers. These are 'sowing bountifully,' and they are also 'reaping bountifully!'—2 Cor. 9:6.

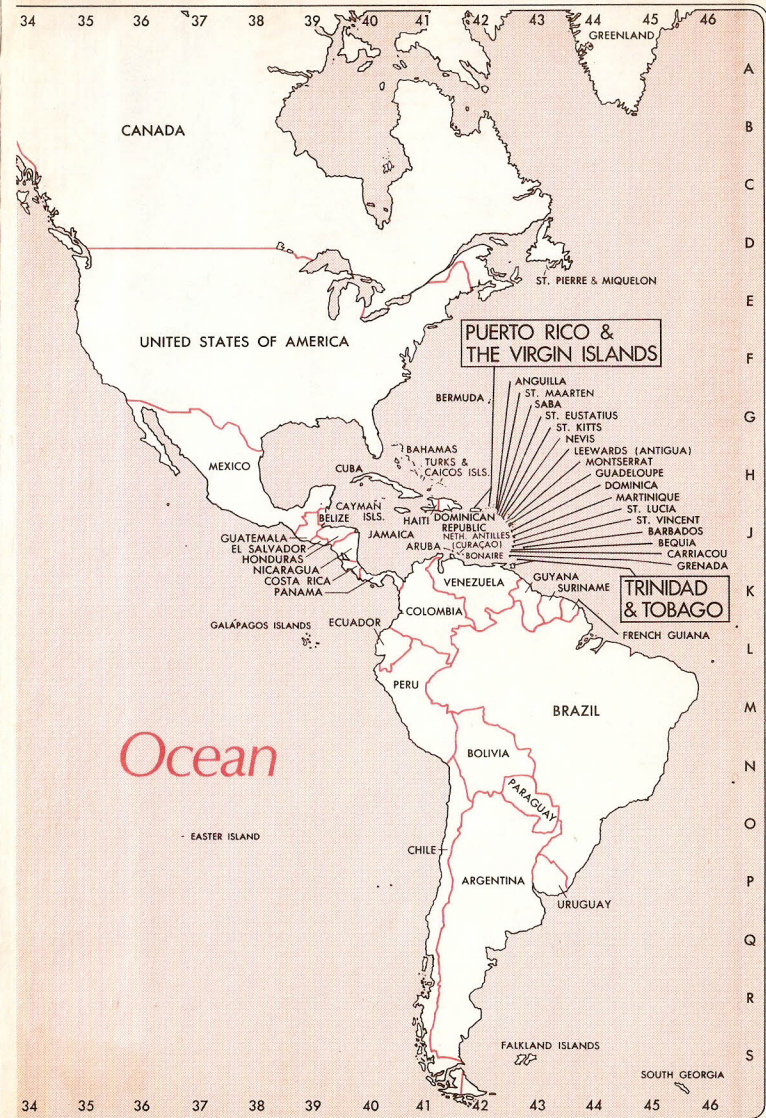
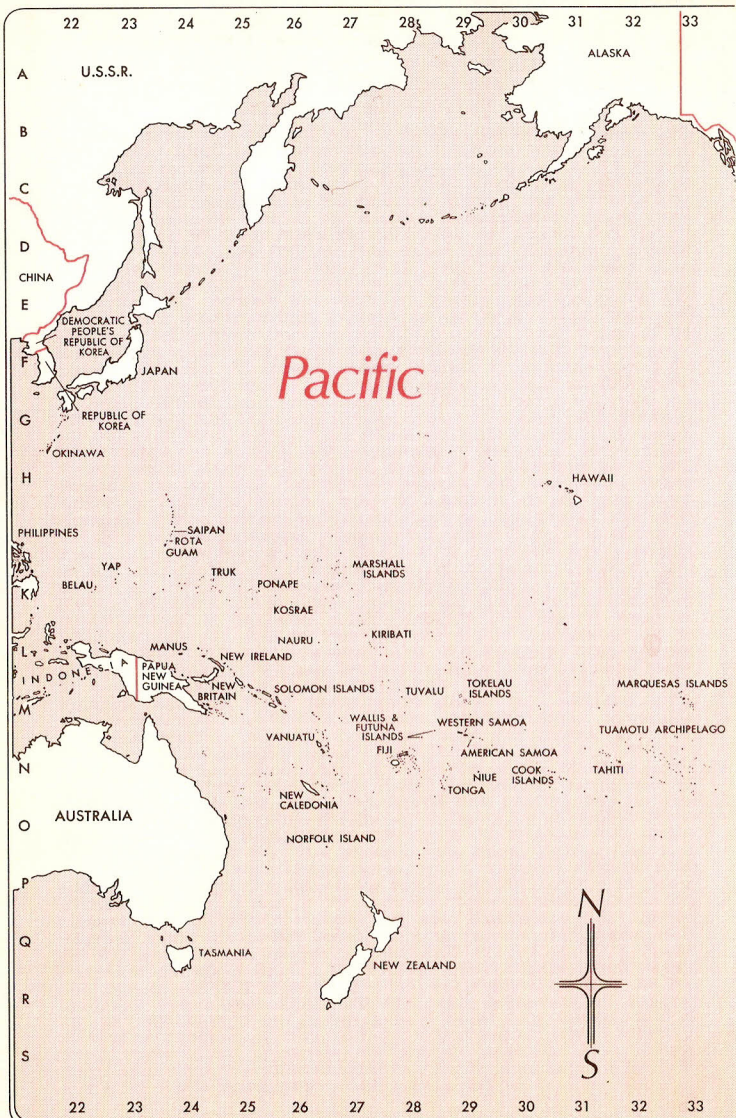
In a melody sung to Jehovah, David declared, "Happy is the one you choose and cause to approach, that he may reside in your courtyards." How true that is of each one of God's people today! Yes, all of us can respond to our God: "We will certainly be satisfied with the goodness of your house, the holy place of your temple. With fear-inspiring things in righteousness you will answer us, O God of our salvation, the Trust of all the borders of the earth and those far away on the sea." Wherever we are serving on this earth, may Jehovah be our trust. Enriched by all of Jehovah's loving-kindnesses, let us cry to him with jubilation: "You have crowned the year with your goodness"! (Ps. 65:4, 5, 9, 11) And as we turn now to our work for 1987, may we be like-minded with Joshua who said: "As for me and my household, we shall serve Jehovah!"—Josh. 24:15.

Your brothers,

GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

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